

Learning and Interpreting The Bible - 1 - Introduction

Introduction:

1. As Jesus prayed for the disciples “*who will believe in me through their Word,*” (all of us today), He prayed “*that they all may be one.*” Jesus knew that a lack of unity among His disciples would create a bad impression. He wanted unity so “*that the world may believe that You sent Me.*” (Jn. 17:20-23).
 - a. *"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. John 17:20-23*
2. Paul elaborated on this when he told the Corinthians, “*I plead with you, brethren,*” “*that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*” (1Cor. 1:10). There were four things He wanted: (1) speak the same thing. (2) no divisions among you. (3) joined together in the same mind. (4) joined together in the same judgements.
3. That we don't have that unity today in America is obvious to anyone who has looked at the doctrines of the 1,000's of denominations today. They are not one! They do not speak the same thing! There are divisions, and many do think the Bible must be flawed. While everyone knows math only has one right answer per equation, multitudes have drawn the conclusion that the Bible must be flawed when they look at the different answers given to the same questions.
4. **The problem is not the Scriptures, but the hearts of those who read them.** Peter warned of those who would “*twist the scriptures to their own destruction*” (2Pet. 3:16). Paul explained that turmoil and controversy, arises “*because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved*” (2Th. 2:10). He later encouraged Timothy (and all of us) to “*be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*” (2Tim. 2:15).
 - a. The shame of false interpretation is not in Scripture, but those who falsely interpret it. Like a trial, the lawyer for the defense and the prosecution seek to take all the facts and bend them to the conclusion of guilt or innocence. The good jury listens to all the facts, then seeks for the truth of guilt or innocence. True Christians do not search the Scriptures to prove what they already believe. They search the Scriptures to see if what they believe is true or not.
 - b. *Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Acts 17:11-12*
5. The key to all learning is to find the basic principles necessary to always come to the correct answer. In English, math, science and history there are axioms and foundations that must be laid. Once they are understood, the only way to get a different answer is to make a mistake. These principles are not difficult to understand and once we learn them, we can apply them to all branches of learning and all come to the same conclusion: The right answer.
6. When a child begins school, he quickly learns **the three key principles to successfully master any subject. The first and most basic is simple instruction.** The teacher lectures and explains and the students take notes, memorize, and learn the material. Tests are given and answers are right or wrong based on facts and truth. In math, a student is introduced to numbers 0 - 9 and to “+ , - , × , ÷ , =.” Once the numbers and symbols are learned, everyone in the class is expected to get **the same “right” answer every time.** That is the absolute nature of truth, it is exclusive!
7. A large portion of the truth revealed in Scripture follows this same path. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Paul was an apostle, the church is Jesus' body and there is only one body (Eph 1:22-23; 4:4-6). These are facts! We memorize them and all give the same answer. They are no more open to interpretation than $2+2=4$. There cannot be ten different answers when one is dealing with absolute truth. There is only one.
8. **The second principle of teaching is imitation.** As students learn numbers and the alphabet, there is only one way to make them. Most classrooms had pictures of the letters and numbers on the walls of the room, showing where to start with the pencil and how it must move to make

uniform letters. Only when they can **duplicate** those letters as pictured do they have the **right** answer. Those who interpret them differently will not be able to read and write, or get the right answer in math.

- a. But that is only the beginning. Many tasks are far too complex to try to teach with instructions alone. Learning to tie shoes, button shirts, drive a car or any other complex skill requires more than books and facts. This is why doctors must undergo years of learning facts through instruction, but they must also do years of watching others do the procedure and then seek to imitate it exactly. There is very little margin for error when working on a heart or brain. do arithmetic. If my "6" looks like an "&" every math answer with a 6 in it will be wrong. They must be learned by example and imitation.
9. The Scriptures also use this principle. When the tabernacle was being built, it was far too complex and there was no margin for error. God showed him the pattern and commanded that he imitate it. Like all builders, it is not enough to give them instructions alone. There must be blueprints with exact dimensions.
 - a. There were things that Jesus felt could be more quickly and accurately if they followed an example. He had taught many times on humility and service. Yet they had not learned the lesson. He used the example of washing their feet. *"For I have **given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.**"* (Jn. 13:15). Paul said the same thing. *"Brethren, **join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.**"* (Phil. 3:17). When we all follow the examples God has given us in the Scriptures we will all produce the same product.
10. **The third method doesn't have a name. It goes by different names in different fields of learning. It is called logic in science, diagnosis in medicine, deduction in criminal investigation, inference in statistics, common sense in everyday life, syllogism in philosophy, or implication in .** Because it is highly advanced and takes cognitive skills, it is the most difficult one to train and teach, and the one where mistakes can easily be made. It is characterized by the ability to take several concepts or ideas and draw the logical conclusion. The author of Sherlock Holmes was a master at creating a crime where the obvious could not solve it. It took observation and logic to deduce the truth that no one else but Sherlock could see. Doctors often base their diagnosis on logical conclusions based on symptoms, Lab results, X-rays or an other pertinent facts they might learn. Word problems in math and essay questions in History and Science work on the same principles. The student must take basic knowledge of several facts and **draw the logical conclusion based on inference and deduction and implication.**
11. Syllogistic reasoning is first learned in math with the equation if $a=b$ and $b=c$ then $a=c$. When this is carried into physics, chemistry or physiology, many amazing inventions and substances are created. The harnessing of electricity or the development of medications is not based on direct learning or example, but logic, inference, and deduction. Although the most complicated form of learning, it holds the most potential for growth and development.
12. When we approach the Scriptures with these same tools used in science or math, we will be rewarded with truth! Jesus used critical thinking skills and common sense in His deductions. When asked about the resurrection from the dead, He said: *"But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him."* (Lk. 20:37-38). This is pure deduction and logic. Jesus simply reminded them that since God said I **am** their God, and the eternal God cannot be the God of those who are dead and no longer exist, they are still alive. There are many important truths to be found by using the power of deduction, logic and inference.
13. **Conclusion:** When God created the heavens and the earth, He created math, physics, chemistry and physiology. He also wrote the Bible. When we use the same principles of interpretation for the former in our study of spiritual truths found in the Scriptures, we will know the truth and the truth will make us free.

- 1 What was the one thing Jesus prayed for “*those who believe in me through their word?*” (1)
- 2 What was Jesus trying to avoid that would come with divisions? (1)
- 3 What four things did Paul plead with the Corinthians to do? (2)
- 4 Are those who call themselves disciples of Jesus united? (3)
- 5 What do people think of the Bible today because of all the division? (3)
- 6 Why are people not united on the truth in the Scriptures? (4)
- 7 What do defense and prosecution lawyers do with facts? (4a)
- 8 What is the jury supposed to do? (4a)
- 9 What is the key to all conclusions we make regarding Scripture? (5)
- 10 What is the first principle a child must learn to be successful in school? (6)
- 11 What is the second principle that a child learns in school? (8)
- 12 Can one learn to drive or become a doctor only by reading and learning facts? (8a)
- 13 Did God ever use examples and patterns in the Scripture? (8a)
- 14 Why does the third method have so many names? (10)
- 15 How did the author of Sherlock Holmes make his books so intriguing? (10)
- 16 What do doctors need for an accurate diagnosis? (10)
17. How did Jesus prove there is a resurrection? (12)

Acts 15 - Gentiles: Circumcision and the Law of Moses

Introduction:

Although there were many prophecies quoted by James and Paul that plainly revealed the Gentiles would be invited to return to God when the Messiah took the throne, Israel was completely unprepared for it. The Holy Spirit took three distinct actions to remove the controversy and make the truth clear. First, He used Peter to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. Second, He sent Paul and Barnabas out to preach to them. Third, He called the gathering in Jerusalem where the issues were thoroughly discussed and an inspired letter was written containing the decrees regarding the Gentiles.

Peter is Chosen to Bring the Gospel to the Gentiles

When Peter was chosen to bring the gospel to them, he was given assurances every step of the way that this was from God.

(1) First, there was the vision of the unclean animals that he was told to eat because God had cleansed them. As Peter pondered the meaning of this vision, (2) the men sent from Cornelius came to the door and (3) the Holy Spirit commanded him to go with them without any doubts. Peter even took the additional precaution of (4) bringing witnesses. They arrived and heard (5) the account of the angel's appearance and (6) the command to send to Joppa and find Peter who would come and speak to him. The exact words were "He will tell you what you must do," and "will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved." (Acts 10:6; 11:14). (7) Cornelius had obeyed the angel and prepared for Peter's arrival. "Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God." (Acts 10:28).

As Peter had been commanded not to doubt, (8) he began to speak the words of the gospel that would save them. When he reached the (9) part where belief in Jesus would bring the remission of sins, (10) the Holy Spirit gave clear evidence that these people were ready to obey the gospel, by allowing them to speak in tongues. (11) Peter and all the witnesses who came with him were astonished. (12) Peter then gave them to final command to obey the gospel.

Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days. Acts 10:47-48

Peter is Questioned in Jerusalem

After Peter returned to Jerusalem he was questioned. The wisdom of the Holy Spirit in guiding Peter every step of the way is clear. They accused him of doing wrong. His defense was to give the facts exactly as they occurred. He told them about the vision, the arrival of the three men, the command of the Holy Spirit to go with them and the six witnesses. He recounted his encounter with Cornelius. That he had seen an angel and the angel had told him to send for Peter and that Peter would tell him words that would save his entire house. Peter had only begun what he thought they needed to know when the Holy Spirit gave them the ability to speak in tongues. Since God had given them the same sign he had to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, Peter knew God had approved of them.

There was no gap in the logical progression of the unfolding events. At no time was any choice given to Peter. He was guided, commanded and directed every step of the way. He could not have done anything else than what he did. He used no wisdom of his own, he only followed God's guidance.

When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life." Acts 11:18

Barnabas and Saul Chosen by The Holy Spirit

When the time came for the gospel to be taken to the Gentiles, the Holy Spirit again took control. First, He revealed to the prophets and teachers in Antioch that He was calling Barnabas and Saul to a work He wanted them to do. They sent them away, and it was plainly stated that the Holy Spirit was the one who sent them.

the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. 4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, ... 27 they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. Acts 13:2-3; 14:27

As they began preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, the wrath (also the envy/jealousy) of the Jews was kindled. It started with contradictions and blasphemy. Then grew to stirring up the multitudes and finally to stoning Paul and leaving him for dead. After Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, they related all these things and explained that it was what "God had done with them."

False Teachers Seek to Bring Error into the Gospel

After God "opened the door of faith for the Gentiles" through the work of Paul and Barnabas, the first

error entered the church. Men came down from Jerusalem, preaching something far different than had been preached before. Gentiles could not be saved just by obeying the gospel, they must also be circumcised.

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." Acts 15:1

This had not been preached by Peter and it had not been preached by Paul and Barnabas or any other preacher of the gospel. There was no room in the truth of the gospel for two conflicting doctrines on salvation, so Paul and Barnabas debated the Scriptures with them.

Paul and Barnabas Told to go to Jerusalem

While Luke gives the general historical facts that "they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question" (Acts 15:2), Paul gave more specifics when he wrote the book of Galatians a few years later. He revealed that the main reason they determined they should go to Jerusalem was "revelation." As Peter with Cornelius, the Holy Spirit commanded them to go.

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Gal 2:1-3

God knew this was going to be a problem that would plague the church down through the centuries. It became clear through subsequent letters that the teachings continued to be carried out to the Gentiles. Paul told the Galatians that anyone who accepted this would be severed from Christ and fallen from grace and that those preaching it were anathema from God.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. 2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. 3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 You are severed from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. Gal. 5:1-4

I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. Gal. 1:6-9

All of this was to be set forth in Jerusalem. The letter written after this meeting contained the decrees that Peter and James, the elders and the brethren at Jerusalem had all become united. This was the true gospel of Jesus Christ regarding the Gentiles. Even to this day, there are some who teach falsely that various aspects of the Law of Moses must be bound on Gentile Christians.

Paul and Barnabas Reported all that God had Done with Them

On the way to Jerusalem, the wonderful news of the Gentile conversions from the first missionary journey by Paul and Barnabas brought great joy to the brethren in the various congregations where they stopped. Luke gave an example of what they were doing when they arrived at Jerusalem.

So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. 4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. Acts 15:3-5

It was in the midst of this joyful news that "some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed" began to teach the same thing that had brought them to Jerusalem. The error centered on two points:

Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved. Acts 15:1

It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. Acts 15:5

some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law" — to whom we gave no such commandment — Acts 15:24

Those of the sect of the Pharisees sought to bind circumcision and the law of Moses on Gentiles. They sought to bring the Gentiles under the covenant with Abraham (circumcision) (Gen. 17:1-14) and the covenant with Israel at Sinai (law of Moses).

God would later reveal to them that baptism would do for the spirit of both Jew (circumcised) and Gentile (uncircumcised) what circumcision had done for Israel before Jesus died on the cross.

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Col. 2:11-14

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, Phil. 3:2-4

He would also reveal that He had already removed the Old Covenant at the cross and it would soon vanish away. There was only a new covenant and both Jew and Gentile would be saved under it.

God, 6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ... 7 But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, 2Cor. 3:5-7

And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. ... 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. Gal. 3:17; 24

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. Eph 2:14-17

For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. 13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. ... 18 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, 19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. Heb. 7:12-13; 18-19

For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. ... 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. Heb 8:4-7, 13

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? ... 9 He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Heb 10:1-2; 9-10

This was the truth that God was seeking to reveal to them. Any of these things could have been revealed at this meeting. Paul was an inspired apostle and the writer of Hebrews spoke through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit wanted this meeting to proceed exactly as it did to give all future uninspired disciples the means to also go through the Scriptures and find the answer to any doctrine that begins to have two entirely different answers.

At Least Three Meetings

Harmonizing Luke's account with what Paul told the Galatians adds to the importance of this meeting. By revelation Paul went two Jerusalem and communicated privately with those of reputation. . We don't know when the meeting Paul spoke of occurred. It could have been after the sect of the Pharisees raised their objections or it could have been before.

And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Gal 2:2-3

After this initial discussion, a second meeting followed. It is difficult to set the time frame of Paul's words to the Galatians with those of Luke here. Luke records two meetings and Paul adds a third. The order would most likely be:

1. Communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation
2. received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.
3. Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. ... Then all the multitude kept silent and listened...

The first two might have been reversed, but it is doubtful. Paul had no way of knowing how he would be received in this matter and would want that settled before the opportunity to be challenged would arise. But there were definitely three meetings. The private meeting was very extensive but Luke records none of it. Paul gives some of the details

But from those who seemed to be something — whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man — for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10 They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do. Gal. 2:6-10

This private meeting began by revealing that "the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter." The proof of this centered on the Holy Spirit (He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in

me toward the Gentiles) and the miracles performed. What Peter had done among the Jews, Paul had done among the Gentiles. By the end of the meeting the right hand of fellowship had been offered and the decision for Paul and Barnabas to continue working among the Gentiles. With the assurance that he had not run in vain and that they were all united on the gospel message for the Gentiles, the next public meeting began.

By comparing several scriptures, we see the audience in this final meeting consisted of the apostles and elders, all the multitude, the whole church and the Holy Spirit.

6 Now **the apostles and elders came together** to consider this matter.

12 Then **all the multitude kept silent and listened** to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles.

22 Then **it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church**, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas,

23 They wrote this, letter by them: **The apostles, the elders, and the brethren**,

28 For **it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us**, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

Like the previous meeting, this meeting began with controversy.

But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." 6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. 7 And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: Acts 15:5-7

All these men were inspired. Paul and Barnabas were there because the Holy Spirit had commanded them to be present. Peter had been chosen to bring the gospel to the Gentiles and James (not the apostle who was killed by Herod - Acts 12:2), but James the Lord's brother.

Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. Acts 12:2

But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place. Acts 12:17

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. Gal. 1:18-19

Since the letter they wrote makes it clear that "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us," that this was all done under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Peter

Since the Holy Spirit was guiding each of these men in their words, there can be no doubt that the method chosen by Peter was not his own. The Holy Spirit selected these words and later inspired Luke to write them. Peter proclaimed that everything that was done in Acts 10-11 was done because God chose him to take the gospel to the Gentiles so they could hear and believe.

*Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, **you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.** 8 So God, who knows the heart, **acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us,** 9 and made **no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.** 10 Now therefore, **why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?** 11 But we believe that **through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.**" Acts 15:7-11*

What Peter had done was the template. God certainly got it right the first time and He used the Holy Spirit every step of the way. Everything Peter did was an example because it was not done by him but by God. Through this example we see how salvation came and will always come to the Gentiles. God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile. He purified the hearts of each by faith in Jesus.

What they were now discussing had nothing to do with God's plan as set forth when He sent Peter. God had said nothing about circumcision or the Law of Moses. Those who were adding to what Peter had done were creating an additional yoke. They were testing (tempting) God to break out upon them for adding a burden to the Gentiles which Israel had never been able to shoulder or bear from the very beginning. The truth as seen in Peter's example is that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will save them exactly the same way it had Israel beginning in Acts 2.

Paul explained the exact nature of how the Holy Spirit was using Peter. The truth is that as they were teaching the disciples to observe the things Jesus commanded (Mt. 28:18) they were observing them too. Paul's ways in Christ (his conduct) is what he taught everywhere in every church. God made them a pattern and if we do the things we see in Him God will be with us.

*Therefore I exhort you, **be imitators of me.** 17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and **he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.** 1Cor. 4:16-18*

*Brethren, **join in following my example**, and note those who so walk, as **you have us for a pattern.** Phil. 3:17-18*

***The things** which you learned and received and heard **and saw in me**, these do, and **the God of peace will be with you.** Phil. 4:9*

With this first method for resolving a doctrinal controversy we are required and it is demanded that we look at every example of the apostles and prophets recorded for us in the NT.

Barnabas and Paul

*Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to **Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles.** Acts 15:12*

At first glance, this appears to play a minor role in this discussion. But further thought must be given. The Holy Spirit commanded them to go to Jerusalem and be a part of this meeting. What they are relating is part of the Holy Spirit's goal of bringing the church to unity on this doctrinal controversy. Luke again reversed their names. Here in Jerusalem Barnabas still had a greater respect and prominence. They simply recorded all the miracles and signs God had allowed them to perform. There are several important passages that make clear what they are doing.

Each of these passages states the same thing when a man does miracles the necessary conclusion and inference is that God is behind what is being taught. God bore witness with the signs, wonders, various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is how God proved Jesus was approved by Him and how Peter proved that Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God.

*how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was **confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?** Heb. 2:3-4*

*"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, **a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know** — Acts 2:22*

*Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, **He poured out this which you now see and hear.** Acts 2:33*

It was how the Lord bore witness and confirmed the word

*But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. 3 Therefore they stayed there a long time, **speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.** Acts 14:2-3*

*So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, **the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.** Amen. Mk. 16:19-20*

It is how Paul proved that he was an apostle working with the Gentiles as it proved Peter was an apostle to the Jews. In short they are the signs of an apostle.

*when they saw that **the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), Gal. 2:7-8***

For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient — 19 in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Rom. 15:18-19

Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. 2Cor. 12:12

God has not given a name to this form of proof. We use it all the time in various realms of learning and proving. It is called logic in science, diagnosis in medicine, deduction in criminal investigation, inference in statistics, common sense in everyday life, syllogism in philosophy, it is also the basis of implication and necessary inferences. Just because God gave it no name doesn't mean we can't identify it and use it in our own inquiries.

Jesus told the Sadducees they were in error because they did not know the Scriptures and then proceeded to use logic and inference to make a deduction that proved they were mistaken in their doctrine. He did exactly what Barnabas and Paul was doing here. He used the events and words at the burning bush to prove the resurrection. Telling the Sadducees that because they did not know how to do this they were greatly mistaken and did not know the Scriptures.

*Jesus answered and said to them, **"Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? 25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. 26 But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' 27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."** Mk. 12:24-27*

This places this type of reasoning as an important means to assess doctrines and find truth.

James

There was nothing in the words of Peter, or the miracles or Barnabas and Paul that in any way contradicted the prophets. The truth that God "*visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name*" was a subject that after a careful study of the Old Testament Scriptures proved "*the words of*

the prophets agree.”

And after they had become silent, **James answered**, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me: 14 Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. 15 And **with this the words of the prophets agree, JUST AS IT IS WRITTEN**: 16 'After! this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the Lord who does all these things.' 18 **"Known to God from eternity are all His works.** 19 Therefore **I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God,** Acts 15:13-20

This passage confirms something Peter stated many years in his letter. The messianic prophecies of the prophets were not written for those living at that time. They were written for the gospel age. They are not OT doctrine, but confirm and explain NT teaching. Thus the Gentiles becoming a part of the church without losing their status as Gentiles was not written for the Mosaic age, but for Christians. Thus these prophecies help us understand NT doctrine.

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who PROPHESED OF THE GRACE THAT WOULD COME TO YOU, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when **HE TESTIFIED BEFOREHAND THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST AND THE GLORIES THAT WOULD FOLLOW.** 12 To them it was revealed that, **NOT TO THEMSELVES, BUT TO US THEY WERE MINISTERING THE THINGS** which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things which angels desire to look into. 1 Pet. 1:10-12

James cited Amos 9:11-12, while Paul had already quoted Isa 49:6, and in Romans 15:9-12 gave four others (Ps. 18:49; Deut. 32:43; Ps. 117:1; Isa. 11:10) to prove conclusively that even before Jesus died on the cross and the gospel was preached it was God's intention that Gentiles as Gentiles would worship and serve God under the New Covenant.

Indeed He says, **'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'** Isa 49:6

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people." Deut 32:43

Therefore **I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the Gentiles, And sing praises to Your name.** Ps 18:49

Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples! Ps 117:1

"And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious." Isa 11:10

that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? 25 **As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved."** 26 **"And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, "You are not My people," There they shall be called sons of the living God."** Rom. 9:23-26

In an additional proof that these prophecies were to be used for us today, James reminds us that **"Known to God from eternity are all His works."** God already knew from eternity what He was going to do and that His plans for the Gentiles had been fixed then, revealed through the prophets and now confirmed through Peter and the work of Paul and Barnabas.

This final method is the most common today. It is what made the Bereans noble.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Acts 17:11-12

The Letter with the Decrees

The inspired words of Peter, Barnabas and Paul, and James left the church with no doubt about this conclusion. The controversy was settled and the truth revealed. The decision to send a letter is the first time the inspiration of the apostles and prophets is written and even in the letter itself, the Holy Spirit's wisdom and oversight is affirmed. **"For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us."** Acts 15:28

It is called a letter

So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the **letter**. 31 When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. Acts 15:30-32

And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the **decrees** to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. Acts 16:4-5

Thus they saw the letters written by the apostles and other inspired writers as decrees (ordinances; laws) from God. This letter was written to the Gentiles who had been troubled by the false teachings of those who had come to them. The credibility of these teachers is removed by affirming they had no divine authority or inspiration to back up their words. While the writers of this letter were those selected by the Lord and given the inspiration to reveal God's will. Along with the letter several witnesses are sent to validate the truth. This letter brought great relief and consolation to those who had feared they would have to become much more than Christians in their service to God.

Learning and Interpreting The Bible - 2 - Three Methods

Introduction:

1. The only way people can come to the same conclusion is if they are in possession of the same facts and are using the same principles of interpretation. This is clearly seen in any trial in our criminal justice system. The lawyers for the defense and prosecution hold the same facts, but their method of interpreting differ due to bias and intent. The defense seeks to prove innocence and the prosecution, guilt. Only the jury has the ability to assess all the facts and the means by which those facts were interpreted. The more biased the interpretation the easier it is to see it is false.
2. **Since everyone possesses the same facts recorded in the Bible, the only reason for differences of opinion would be exactly the same as those in a trial.** Either bias on the part of the one studying the Scriptures or a false method of interpretation to get to the desired result.
3. **It must be clearly understood that the multitudes of differing interpretations is not the fault of Scripture, but of those who interpret them.** That everyone could and should come to the same conclusion on every doctrine in Scripture is evident after reading Jesus prayer for unity. (Jn 17:20-23). We **CAN** *"all speak the same thing,"* have *"no divisions"* and *"be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."* (1Cor. 1:10). When what can and should be done is not being done, it is not the fault of Scripture but of those who refuse to abandon their false interpretations and come to the same conclusion.
4. **The first time there were two interpretations of Scripture among the disciples** occurred after Paul and Barnabas returned from *"going into all the world to preach the gospel."* A difference of opinion arose over the proper way for Gentiles to obey the gospel. Paul and Barnabas had been preaching the same gospel to the Gentiles as they did to the Jews. *"The sect of the Pharisees"* said, *"It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses."* Since their doctrine was a clear violation of Jesus' prayer, *"the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter."*
5. **Three methods of interpretation were used to find the truth, remove the error, and restore unity.** First, Peter spoke of the example God had made of him in bringing the Gentiles into the church. Second, Paul and Barnabas used critical thinking skills to draw the logical conclusion based upon deduction and inference. Third, James used the clear instructions the Law contained. There was no room for two different views. One was right and the other, wrong.
6. **Peter's Example**
7. *Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.*
8. Peter referred to the events recorded in Acts 10-11. God knew it would be a difficult transition for the Jews to accept Gentiles, so He *chose Peter* to bring it about. An *angel* told *Cornelius* to *send for Peter*. The *Holy Spirit* told *Peter* to *go*. When Peter arrived, he had *just begun his sermon* when *God gave them the same gift He had given to the apostles* on the day of Pentecost. As these events unfolded, Peter saw *he could not withstand God* and *immediately commanded them to be baptized*. There was no mention of circumcision or the Law. This example was to be the template by which all Gentiles were to be saved. Simple obedience to the gospel, the Law was done away.
9. **Paul and Barnabas - Logic, Deduction and Inference**
10. the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many **miracles and wonders** God had worked through them among the Gentiles.
11. Although many have struggled to understand the words of Paul and Barnabas, any student of logic and deduction can easily identify it. They used an obvious inference that would lead all the hearers to the same conclusion. From the very first sermon, **miracles and wonders** were used to prove God's approval. *"Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him."* (Acts 2:22). It is impossible to miss the deduction and logic of this inference. *"The Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands."* (Acts 14:17), By deduction and inference, their account of the **signs and wonders** *"God had worked through them"* was absolute proof they had preached the truth.
12. **James - Direct Instruction from Moses Law regarding Gentiles**
13. *with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ... the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name*

14. James goes right to the Law of Moses and cites a clear Scripture instructing that the rest of mankind (not as Jews, but as Gentiles) would seek the Lord on the same basis as the Jews. God had made it clear that when Jesus *"rebuilt the tabernacle of David,"* everyone (Jew and Gentile) would be allowed to seek the Lord through the gospel. The middle wall of the Law of Moses was removed. *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,"* (Eph 2:14-15)
15. **Their Verdict**
16. **After these three methods of interpretation were used, the conclusion was simple and absolute. The sect of the Pharisees were wrong.** The Gentiles did not need to be circumcised or keep Moses' Law. In the letter they wrote to the Gentiles it was affirmed they were *"assembled with one accord,"* (*spoke the same thing,* had *"no divisions"* were *"be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment"*). (1Cor. 1:10). The entire process was then stamped with Divine approval – *"it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us."* This Holy Spirit had inspired this meeting and gave the methods seen in Peter (inspired example) Paul and Barnabas (logic, deduction and inference that preaching attested by miracles was true), and James using direct instructions out of Scripture.
17. **Conclusion:**
18. **The template to find the truth on every doctrinal disagreement and division has been given by the Holy Spirit!** Whenever there is controversy and division they can always be resolved by these methods. First, we seek all that the examples of the inspired men recorded in Scripture can teach on the subject: *"Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern."* (Phil 3:17). Second, we seek all deductions, logic and inferences we can find on the subject. If we don't, Jesus will say to us as He did to the Sadducees: *"Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures"* and *"You are therefore greatly mistaken."* (Mk. 12: 24-27). Lastly, we seek all the direct instructions the Scriptures contain and submit to them. Only when we do all these things will we fulfill the words of Jesus: *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (Jn. 8:31-32). In this way we can avoid the warning of John: *"Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds."* (2Jn. 9-11)

An Outline of Acts 15

1. A doctrinal problem in the church at Antioch regarding the salvation of the Gentiles. **15:1**
2. Paul & Barnabas are sent to Jerusalem (Paul received a command to go) **15:2 Gal. 2:1-5;**
3. The controversy further outlined. **Acts 15:4-5**
4. The apostles and elders come together to consider the matter. **15:6-7**
5. Peter gives the first speech. **Acts 15:7-11**
 - A. Peter uses His own example in the conversion of the first Gentile.
 - B. His conclusion is that since God accepted Cornelius as a Gentile it is obvious He does not expect the Gentiles to keep the Law. This is just another refusal to submit to God's righteousness and instead to create their own.
6. Paul and Barnabas give the second speech. **Acts 15:12-13**
 - A. They make only one point. God allowed us to perform miracles while we preached among Gentiles.
 1. When God allowed them to perform miracles He was confirming their preaching as coming from Him. **(Heb 2:3-4; Acts 14:3).**
 2. They were teaching that salvation to the Gentiles was by faith in Jesus Christ.
 3. Since God allowed them to perform miracles He was confirming their preaching.
 - B. The only logical conclusion from the three points above is that what they were preaching had to be the truth.
 - C. The term necessary inference has been used to name this principle. It is not given a name in Scripture, but it is obvious they made a logical conclusion based on the facts.
7. James gives the concluding speech. **Acts 15:12-21**
 - A. James simply discusses what the prophets had said about the Gentiles. He then carefully interpreted these clear Scriptures. Simply put, he looks at what they teach and then does it. This is by far the most common means used to resolve all doctrinal disputes.

After this, a letter is drafted in which the Holy Spirit is brought in as an additional witness that this is exactly the way it ought to have been done.

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. Acts 15:1-2

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Gal. 2:1-3

But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Acts 15:5

They wrote this, letter by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings. Acts 15:23

it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Acts 15:25

For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: Acts 15:28

Please read Acts 15:1-40 and Galatians 2:1-10 before answering these questions.

- 1 What two things are necessary for two people to come to the same conclusion? (1)
- 2 Which of these two does everyone have in the Bible? (2)
- 3 How does Jn 17:20 and 1Cor 1:10 prove we could and should draw the same conclusion? (3)
- 4 What was the doctrine leading to the first major disagreement among disciples? (4)
- 5 What were Paul and Barnabas teaching? (4)
- 6 What were the disciples of the Pharisees teaching? (4)
- 7 Who were the three speakers who addressed this issue? (6, 9,12)
- 8 What was the subject of Peter's opening statement (7)
- 9 Did Peter use any scriptures or any other proofs? (8)
- 10 Why were Paul and Barnabas there? (Read Gal. 2:1-2)
- 11 After coming all the way from Antioch at the command of the Spirit, what did they say? (10)
- 12 How did their account of miracles performed prove that Gentiles do not need circumcision (11)
- 13 How did Peter prove the same thing about Jesus in Acts 2:22? (11)
- 14 Does this indirect method to prove the truth have a name? (11)
- 15 What was the main point James used to prove Gentiles do not need circumcision (12)
- 16 How do we know that these three methods have been approved by the Holy Spirit? (16)
17. Can we use this template in doctrinal controversies today? (18)

Logic, Deduction and Necessary Inference

1. Hermeneutics is a word used to describe methods or rules of interpretation. Not only for the Bible, but also for lawyers, judges, and doctors. Whenever a set of facts must be interpreted, they must be interpreted by the rules and laws of that profession. In the Bible, this means that we must interpret the Bible using the rules of interpretation found in the Scriptures themselves.
2. We have already seen that the Bible demands we use the examples of the inspired writers. The Holy Spirit commanded us to use Paul's examples as one of the rules of interpretation. When we are seeking to draw a conclusion about doctrine, we must not overlook the power of examples to help lead us to the right conclusion.
3. A second important rule of interpretation centers on the logical conclusions that must be drawn based on putting all the Scriptures together. The knowledge and understanding we can gain through this method are very important to the conclusions we draw.
4. We don't often think about the sources of our knowledge. They simply enter our mind as facts and we act upon them regardless of their source. But if we take the time to think about it, we soon see the difference. There is the knowledge we gain from what we experience from our five senses. This is the most reliable form of knowledge, but it is limited because it can only come from our direct experiences in one short life.
5. The **second source** of knowledge is that which we receive by trusting what others tell us. Teachers, textbooks, news stories, advice from those we trust all form the second and most far reaching source. The **third source** which is seldom discussed, but becomes the one with the greatest potential is logic, deduction and inference. It is here that the door for new and innovative thinking becomes possible.
6. We infer all that cannot be known directly. There are many things we never see or measure that we *know*. The "*transitive property of equality*" (if $a = b$ and $b = c$, then $a = c$) also known as the syllogism forms the basis for this form of logic. If we can't see "c", but we know "a" and "b." then with confidence we can proceed to the logical conclusion. When we watch a trial, it is the guilt or innocence that is "c" because it is the unknown. Witnesses and evidence form the basis of "a" and "b." For example if fingerprints and DNA are found at the scene of the crime, we have the "a" and if we can then prove that means and motive were also present proving the "b" then "c" would be guilt. The more "a" and "b" are found, the easier it is to come to that conclusion.
7. But if the evidence doesn't rise to the level of clear and conclusive proof, there is doubt about "c." Since we can only convict if there is no reasonable doubt, there must be an acquittal. This is why we have added "**necessary**." Not all inferences are absolute. If there is any degree of doubt, it is not a "**necessary**" inference.
8. When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us He left no doubt that the "*transitive property of equality*" works exactly the same way in Scripture as it does in the material creation. The same absolute laws in the spiritual realm make necessary inferences, deduction and logic of the same value in the study of Scripture as they are mathematics, science, physics medicine or criminal justice.
9. In the midst of the scoffing Sadducees, Jesus used an inference to stop them in their tracks. He told them the reason they were so wrong in their conclusions about life after death was because they did not know the Scriptures. Their ignorance here centered on their inability to make a logical and necessary inference. Thus, by His own decree, if we don't use them appropriately, we too will not know the Scriptures.
10. He quoted God's words at the burning bush, which on the surface had nothing to do with the resurrection or life after death.

Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; ...24 Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? 25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. 26 But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? 27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken." Mk. 12:18-27
11. Clearly on the surface this has nothing to do with life after death. It is the account of Moses approach to the burning bush where God introduced Himself. After being told to take off his sandals God, these were God's own words.

Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." 6 Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. Ex. 3:5-6
12. But although it had nothing directly to do with the resurrection, logically it had everything

necessary to resolve this controversy and to “*know the Scriptures*” and “*the power of God.*” This is obviously the “*transitive property of equality*” and it is used in the Scriptures as a means of resolving a doctrinal controversy.

13. Life after death and the resurrection is the unknown (“c”) and the center of this controversy over the truth. When God said I **am** the **God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, even though they had all been dead for 100's of years and their bodies were still in the tomb where they had all been laid (Gen. 49:30-31). Since this passage states that God was still at that present moment their God, a conclusion must be drawn. Either God is the God of the dead, or they are still alive. When Jesus stated the obvious, that God is not the God of the dead but of the living, the logical deduction was clear. The “a” is “God ‘is’ the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, The “b” is “God is not the God of the dead but of the living.” Therefore the “c” is “People continue to live after they have died and therefore there will be a resurrection.

14. This ended the controversy. “*The multitudes were astonished,*” the Scribes said, “*Teacher you have spoken well,*” and “*the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees.*” (Mt. 22:33-34; Lk. 20:39). This represents the true power of the necessary inference when properly used in Scripture.

15. Jesus immediately followed up with a question that forced them to make a necessary inference but they refused to make it.

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." 43 He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 44 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"'? 45 If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" 46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore. Matt 22:41-46

16. David called the Christ, His Lord, but the Christ was to be his son. How can David call one of His sons Lord? They refused to answer, but they could and should have known the answer.

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, Isa. 9:6-7

17. God had made it very clear that this son would be more than a man. He would be “*God with us.*” (Isa 7:14; Mt 1:23) called Mighty God. Thus the only logical and scriptural answer to the question is that He must be the son of God. They had been incensed over the fact that He had implied in so many ways that He was the Son of God. But that is the very charge they would make against him before Pilate. They knew, but the refused to acknowledge. Yet their own Scriptures revealed but they refused to accept it.

The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." John 19:7

18. The sermon preached by the Holy Spirit through Peter's mouth was filled with necessary inferences. First, just as Paul and Barnabas did at the inspired gathering in Jerusalem, he used the power of miracles as the necessary inference that God approved of Him.

Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know

19. It should be evident to all that when true miracles are performed the one who is allowed to perform them has His approval.

*a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 **God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?** Heb. 2:3-4*

Questions

1. What is the definition of Hermeneutics? (1)
2. What other disciplines use hermeneutics? (1)
3. Where do we find the principles of interpretation that must be used to understand the Bible? (1)
4. What command did Paul give regarding how to properly interpret the Bible (2)
5. What is the second method? (3)
6. What is the first and most reliable form of knowledge? (4)
7. What is the second source from which most of our knowledge comes from? (5)
8. What is the third source that has the greatest potential? (5)
9. What is the "*transitive property of equality*"? (6)
10. How is it used to prove guilt or innocence in court? (6)
11. What is the difference between an inference and a necessary inference? (7)
12. Why did the Sadducees not know that Scriptures that made them mistaken? (9)
13. What do God's words to Moses at the burning bush have to do with the resurrection directly? (10-11)
14. Although life after death cannot be directly known how did Jesus prove it? (12)
15. How did Jesus interpret the phrase "*I am the God of Abraham*"? (13)

16. Since God is not the God of the dead what does this prove? (13)
17. How did the multitudes feel about this kind of reasoning? (14)
18. What did the Scribes say and what did the Pharisees hear? (14)
19. What question did Jesus ask the Pharisees that forced them to make a necessary inference? (15)
20. Could they have known the answer if they knew the Scriptures? (17)
21. Did Peter use necessary inferences in his first sermon? (18)
22. How do we know Jesus was approved of God? (18-19)

Necessary Inference (Logic / Deduction) – Foundation of ALL Faith

1. As noted in our introduction, the source of knowledge varies with subject. Things that occur in our presence we learn through our senses. We learned to drive, cook, and all our skills we use in our jobs or hobbies. We succeed or fail immediately and learn from our mistakes.
2. Evidence and testimony are used for things in the past or out of our presence. Once it is not something we can verify ourselves, depending on the circumstances we begin to use inference and logic to assess the reliability of the testimony. If we find it credible we accept it, but if there is any doubt we become skeptical and continue assessing it to find the truth.
3. The final area of knowledge center on things that have not yet happened or have never been seen or invented. In such realms we must rely entirely on inference, logic and deduction. Every new invention goes through this process for it is the foundation of the scientific method.
4. God has revealed that the basis of faith is found in the second and third methods of gaining knowledge. Like everything that is in the past, so also is everything in the spiritual realm. We can verify nothing with our senses. We must rely on testimony, but this testimony must be accepted through the same logic, deduction and inference as every other thing we accept as truth solely on the basis of the testimony of others.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11:1-2

5. Nothing God has revealed can be understood through direct knowledge. Faith comes from evidence. Evidence is strengthened through logic and inference. All the evidence God has given to create faith is based on inference because they are all things we cannot see to verify. We can only deduce and infer through logic.
6. When the police come on the scene of a crime, it is all in the past and if there were no witnesses, they must take all the facts that are left behind and seek for the truth through the inferences and deductions that must be made from them. This is exactly what God expects us to do with this creation we were born into.

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. Heb. 11:3

7. We come upon this universe and know it came into existence at some time in the past. Some affirm time and chance brought it all into being. But the logic of this breaks down because we never observe it elsewhere. There is no logical way to explain the complexity and function of the universe except concluding that a mind and power far superior to our own made this universe. God is truly the only logical deduction we can make to explain. The syllogism: The universe exists but has a beginning (a) the complexity and perfection rules out time and chance (b) The only logical conclusion is that "c" God created the heavens and the earth. Those who have carefully thought these things through and see the necessary inferences that must be made have a strong faith that cannot be destroyed.
8. God affirms that this evidence is so overwhelming that He will accept no excuse. No one will be able to defend themselves because this is something we do all the time in every other realm. When with far less evidence and logic, we accept a big bang and evolution God will easily prove the bias we had when we drew that conclusion.
9. Thus we infer (have faith) that God exists and deduce His everlasting power and divine nature by looking at the things that are made.
10. We infer inspiration from the perfection of the Scriptures. The only logical explanation: the Holy Spirit is the author. They are are flawless and perfect in every way.
11. We infer that Jesus is the Son of God through the evidence of prophecy and miracles and the resurrection.
12. Each of these cannot be verified by our senses, but after being proven true by logic, inference and deduction we are as convicted as we would be if we could see them. This is why we must walk by faith and not by sight. (2Cor. 5:7).
13. Once we have formed these conclusions all future decisions are based upon it. This is what made Abraham so special to God.
14. Hope follows exactly the same path. It can only be hope if it is in the future. What we see and have possession of cannot be hope because it is possessed and seen. Only what is not seen is hope. This is the hope that is based on logic and deduction. We have a living hope because God raised Jesus from the dead. That resurrection though unseen is proven by overwhelming evidence.

hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. Rom. 8:24-25

Blessed (be) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 1Pet. 1:3

15. Logic and deduction creates a faith and a hope that is so strong that it leads to actions that are unbreakable convictions.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Heb. 11:13

16. It is the logical deductions creating conviction that brings a strong and absolute faith. God's promises and revelations are absolute! It is impossible for God to lie so everything He has revealed to us in Scripture is the same absolute truth as it is in the material realm. But until we have inferred that and see it as absolute will our faith be strong enough to save us.

17. This is what Abraham did! He knew that all the observable facts were against him. His conviction came because he knew God had the power (the material creation) and God had the veracity (it is impossible for God to lie). With these two absolutes he could set aside all the facts the contradicted it and **never** waver in unbelief. This quality of faith, coming only from inference and deduction gives glory to God.

And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." Rom. 4:19-22

18. This is the foundation of all necessary inferences. We look at all the facts in our possession. After drawing the logical inferences and deductions we have an absolute and unbreakable faith that will never waver in unbelief. If we can and must do this with God as Creator, Jesus as the resurrected Savior and the Holy Spirit as the author of all Scripture given by inspiration, then we must do it with everything else as well.

19. Every "fact" and truth revealed in the Bible:
A. is contested by "facts" outside of the Bible,
B. Facts read into the Bible,
C. Lies (fables) that are presented as fact.

Every doctrinal controversy begins here. Yet the one absolute truth that ties the material and spiritual realms together: Truth always prevails. If it harmonizes with the truth in the material realm then it is a fact that will always work. In the material creation, every new idea leading to an invention begins with conflicting facts. Over time the false ones are eliminated. When only truth remains the invention functions as planned.

20. We are told that Thomas Edison was faced with multitudes of possible facts as he began his journey to invent the light bulb. His quest was to find the element that would allow electricity to flow through it and create light. One fact after another was eliminated as false until finally at the end, he found the truth and was made free. We can multiply this by the thousands and millions as doctors, lawyers, police, inventors, explorers and Christians consider the many possibilities and eliminate them one by one until they find the truth. One thing stands supreme! There is only one truth and those who love the truth will not stop until they find it.

21. Since all that is faith is based on evidence and testimony that must be assessed with logic inference and deduction, everything we believe must undergo the same scrutiny. This is why all faith has only one source:

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17

22. Therefore, when there is a doctrinal controversy as the one confronting Jesus with the resurrection, no stone can remain unturned in our quest for truth. So every fact, every example and all the deductions and inferences that can be made from them in God's word must be carefully assessed before the conclusion that we know the truth can be drawn.

Questions

1. What are the two ways we can gain faith? (4)
2. Why do we need logic and deduction with all testimony? (4)
3. What are the two definitions God gives for faith in Hebrews 11:1? ()
4. How do the people of this age assess the evidence left behind in the material creation? (7)
5. Why is any other explanation than God being the Creator illogical? (7)
6. How strong is the evidence God left for us to examine? (8)
7. How do we infer and deduce the existence of God? (9)
8. How do we infer and deduce the inspiration of the Scriptures? (10)
9. How do we infer and deduce Jesus is the Son of God? (11)
10. How does hope follow the same path as faith? (14)

11. What is the evidence of our hope in 1Pet. 1:3?
12. How powerful did the inferences based on God's promises become to Abraham? (17)
13. What must each Christian do to have an unbreakable and unwavering faith? (18)
14. What has man done with every fact and truth revealed in the Scriptures? (19)
15. What is the one absolute truth that ties the material and spiritual realms together? (19)
16. In any quest for truth what must be eliminated? (20)
17. What is the one thing that stands supreme? (20)
18. What is all faith based on? (21)
19. Since all faith is based on this, what else needs to be carefully scrutinized. (21)
20. What is the one source of all true faith in Rom 10 17?
21. Whenever there is a controversy over doctrine what should true Christians do? (22)

Commands

- 1 The issue was simple. Jesus had given the command to go into all the world and to all nations and preach the gospel to every creature (Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16). They were to make disciples by baptizing them and after preaching the gospel, all who believed and were baptized would be saved. While the church remained in Jerusalem and Israel Jesus' commands had been fulfilled. (Acts 1-9). The transition to all nations began smoothly. Peter had been directed by the Holy Spirit to the house of Cornelius and leading him every step, he came to inspired conclusion as they believed the gospel they were commanded to be baptized. The Holy Spirit then separated Barnabas and Saul for the work He had called them to do. All was running smoothly and as God had planned.
- 2 Yet the transition to every nation had created a conflict that threatened to divide the church. Some wanted to add circumcision and the Law of Moses to Jesus' command. To them it was obvious that all Christians must also become Jews. The Holy Spirit sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to settle this issue. As they described the work the Holy Spirit had called them to do, there was an objection regarding circumcision and the Law of Moses.
- 3 Peter reminded them that the Holy Spirit had inspired and guided him in bringing the first Gentiles into the church. He fulfilled Jesus' commands exactly the same way he had the Jews. The Holy Spirit had not commanded circumcision or to teach them the law of Moses. His example should now be the template that all future preachers of the gospel should follow.
- 4 Paul and Barnabas followed, the Holy Spirit guiding their words. (1Cor. 2:9-13). They then added that they had been given the power to perform miracles in each city. This confirmed conclusively that Jesus approved of their message.

They stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. Acts 14:3

- 5 The Holy Spirit then inspired James to arise and speak the final words. The truth that the Gentiles would be invited along with Israel to return had been long ago prophesied. The Holy Spirit used James to reveal that OT prophesy, that clearly spoke of the Messiah could be used to confirm and verify commands in the NT. This was confirmed in Paul's final letter.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2Tim. 3:16-17

Yet even then, this was not new. In the first sermon Peter preached, the Holy Spirit used several prophecies to prove the validity of the new teaching.

- 6 This leads to a very important conclusion. Any command that generates disagreement and controversy can be resolved in this way. Thus James gave us a pattern to follow. When we find people who disagree on any command or doctrine leading to different conclusions, we roll up our sleeves and start looking at the commands themselves. Often a careful assessment of all the commands will resolve it. After we have assessed all the commands, we start looking for prophesy, and other teachings in both covenants that might have some bearing on a correct understanding of the commands.
- 7 Then we look at all the examples where inspired men were fulfilling the commands or did something that has a bearing on the commands. After all this, we start drawing the logical conclusion and necessary inferences that all this information has brought to light. We are like a police detective who has meticulous sought for every clue and then lays them all out to see what conclusions he can draw regarding suspects
- 8 The parallel between secular and spiritual is striking. When there is only one right answer, it must be found by putting forth our greatest efforts to find the truth. God revealed that those who seek the exact truth on every command hold the same position in His eyes as those who are considered noble and high born among men.

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. 12 Therefore many of them believed, Acts 17:11-12

- 9 This love for truth is the one thing that will bring unity and harmony to all disciples. Whenever a disagreement arises those who love the truth will follow the guidance given in Acts 15. With such a love for the truth, we will all come to the same conclusion. This was Paul's plea.

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1 Cor 1:10

The Purpose of Instruction

- 10 When a parent, teacher, or employer gives a task, they must create instructions considering both the wisdom and experience of those receiving them, and evaluating the complexity of the task they want accomplished. Some things are so simple and with so many different ways to accomplish them that they can be worded simply and even vaguely. But those things that are complex require careful thought and wording to be sure the desired results are attained.
- 11 All good teachers parents or employers understand the need for *general* instruction/commands when the task is easy and simple. But when meticulous steps must be taken to reach a very difficult and meticulous result, they must give *specific* step by step instructions.
- 12 God has done exactly the same thing. Scripture contains instructions that must be followed to inherit eternal life and avoid /escape eternal condemnation. Since the outcome is so important, God sent the Holy Spirit to be certain that each command was properly worded to gain the necessary outcome.
- 13 The Scriptures guide us through the things we cannot see and do not understand. This is why *"it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps."* Since God's has revealed that *"My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,"* we can't possibly modify His commands and get the same outcome. (Jer. 10:23; Isa. 55:8).
- 14 When God told Noah to *"make yourself an ark,"* He gave a *general* command. He left the tools and methods to Noah's discretion. But God then gave very *specific* instructions for the materials and dimensions. Only God knew the forces the flood would create and the needs of each animal.
- 15 God gave exact directions about the type of wood, the door and windows, its length, height, and width, and the number of stories. God did not leave these things to him because Noah did not have the wisdom to understand the forces that must be withstood or the number and needs of all the animals. As he followed God's step by step instructions, *"Noah did; according to all that God commanded him"* (Gen. 6:22), and everything worked out successfully.
- 16 Most commands are like this. They combine general instructions with specific ones. When Jesus commanded: *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,"* (Mk. 16:15-16) He left the method of going entirely in our hands. But when they arrived the specific command to preach the gospel requires careful and meticulous effort to fulfill. Paul warned that those who preach any other gospel are accursed. (Gal. 1:6-9)
- 17 When God asked Moses and Israel to *"make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them,"* (Ex. 25:8) it was impossible for them to know how to build it. As a *"copy and shadow of the heavenly things,"* *"Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle" to make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.*" (Heb 8:5). The materials, dimensions, and furniture were so specific, that even written instructions were not enough, God showed him the pattern for each article.
- 18 Every architect and engineer understands exactly what God was doing. When building complex things like airplanes, rockets, skyscrapers and bridges, there are many complex factors to consider. If any of them are not in perfect harmony with the truth a catastrophic failure is inevitable.
- 19 The more complex the finished product the more instructions will be necessary to accomplish it. If any one of these instructions is ignored or modified, there will always be a bad outcome. If this is true in the material creation, how much more in the spiritual one? We may not be able to understand the need for such meticulous submission and obedience, but our full trust and confidence in God will keep us from sin and failure.
- 20 When God told the priests how to offer the incense, He gave specific instructions about ingredients, the altar of incense to burn it on, when it was to be burned and the type of fire used to burn it. If we have any doubt about the exacting standards of God's instructions, we need look no further than the lack of attention to the specific details that cost Nadab and Abihu their lives. While God had asked for *"a censer full of coals of fire from off the altar,"* (Lev 16:12-13), they *"offered profane fire before the LORD which He had not commanded them"*
- 21 When *"they died before the LORD,"* was it any different than the electrician who died after being told to turn off a specific circuit breaker, but chose instead a *"strange"* breaker *"not commanded?"* Just as there must be respect for the awesome power of electricity, there must be respect for the awesome power of God. *"By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified."* (Lev. 10:1-3).
- 22 We only need to learn to assess each command. If it is worded in a general way it allows us to offer our own opinions and judgment. But when God gives *specifics* we are forbidden to use our wisdom and understanding because we are incapable of assessing why God worded it that way

and must trust Him that He is seeking our best interests.

- 23 Interpreting the instructions for any task is not complicated. When given a *general* command, we are being told that the methods are up to us. When Jesus said “*go into all the world*,” He revealed that whatever way we choose is fine. There is no specification on how we get there. But when we start preaching, we can only preach the gospel. Any additions of our own ideas into that preaching will bring a catastrophic failure: “*There are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*” (Gal. 1:7-9)

I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; 5 because Abraham OBEYED MY VOICE and KEPT MY CHARGE, MY COMMANDMENTS, MY STATUTES, AND MY LAWS.” Gen. 26:4-5

“Every COMMANDMENT which I COMMAND you today you must be CAREFUL TO OBSERVE, that you may live and multiply, ... 3 ... He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. ... 6 “Therefore you shall KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS of the Lord your God, to WALK IN HIS WAYS AND TO FEAR HIM. ... 11 “Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping HIS COMMANDMENTS, HIS JUDGMENTS, AND HIS STATUTES which I command you today, Deut 8:1-11

15 “If you love Me, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS ... 21 He who has MY COMMANDMENTS AND KEEPS THEM, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” ... 23 Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will KEEP MY WORD; and My Father will love him, ... 24 He who does not love Me does not KEEP MY WORDS; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me. ... 10 If you keep MY COMMANDMENTS, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. ... 13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you DO WHATEVER I COMMAND YOU. Jn. 14:15-24; 15:10-14

Questions

1. When did the controversy arise over the command Jesus gave to the apostles? (1)
2. What two things did some want to add to Jesus command? (2)
3. What did Peter remind them? (3)
4. When the Holy Spirit inspired James to speak what proof did he give? (5)
5. What does that do to all OT prophesy regarding the reign of the Messiah? (5)
6. How does 2Tim 3:16-17 prove the same thing? (5)
7. When we face a controversy of one of Jesus commands what does James show us? (6)
8. After we have looked all the commands and prophesy where can we go next? (7)

9. The final step is to put it all together and make use what? (7)
10. What is the parallel between the secular and the spiritual? (8)
11. When giving instructions what two things are important to success? (10)
12. When is it ok to give general commands? (11)
13. When is it important to give specific commands (11)
14. What do the Scriptures guide us and lead us through? (13)
15. What were the general and specific commands God gave to Noah? (14-15)
16. What were the general and specific commands Jesus gave in Mk 16:16? (16)
17. Did God give Moses and general commands for the tabernacle? (17)
18. For the answer to the question above why or why not?
19. When an architect or engineer gives specific commands how safe is it for the uninformed to charge them? (18-19)
20. What specific command did God give the priests that costs Nadab and Abihu their lives? (20)
21. Is this any different than an electrician who violates the specific rules? (21)
22. How can we determine if it is a general or specific command? (22)

The Wording of Commands - 2

Introduction:

- 1 There are many conflicts between religious people today as seen by the 33,000-45,000 different churches in the world today. The number is not completely accurate because it includes single (community) churches. Actual denominations involving multiple churches under common leadership, less than two 2,000. Churches with over a million members, probably less than 500 hundred. But they illustrate the sad truth. Jesus' prayer for oneness is completely ignored. (Statistics gleaned off the internet)
- 2 The Catholic church posits that if there had never been a reformation, there would still only be one church. Yet this "unity" was only possible because they kept "rebels" in check through capital punishment and the people ignorant of the Bible with Latin masses.
- 3 The initial protestant churches kept this in check by also using the civil power to imprison or put to death. Those who fled to America formed a government that allowed this freedom for each disciple to decide on his own what he would believe. Slowly those who came from America began to assess their faith by the Bible and the process of division began.

<u>Salvation</u>	<u>Worship</u>	<u>EndTimes</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>
Faith only	Instrumental Music	Rapture	Inspiration
Baptism sprinkling/pouring	1 st Day / Sabbath	Imminent	Miracles today
Baptism water/Holy Spirit	Coffee/food	No Hell	MDR
Once saved always saved	Tongues	Remain on Earth	church organization
Inherited sin/infant baptism	stories and not Word	Premillennialism	Work of the Church
	weekly communion	144,000	Church autonomy
	Role of Women		Social Drinking

- 4 With this as the background, the study of how to properly understand and obey God's commands becomes imperative. We have to find the way to navigate away from the broad gate and enter the narrow gate.

*"Enter by the narrow gate; for **wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction**, and there are **many who go in by it**. **14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life**, and there are **few who find it**. Mt. 7:13-14*

- 5 We must also learn the characteristics of these false teachers who have created an environment where any study on loving truth is evil spoken of.

*But there were also false prophets among the people, even as **there will be false teachers among you**, who will **secretly bring in destructive heresies**, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. **2 And many will follow their destructive ways**, because of whom the **way of truth will be blasphemed**. **3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words**; 2Pet. 2:1-3*

- 6 It is amazing to see billions of people reading their Bibles, yet content with these contradictions. The North star leading the truth in all Bible study demands diligence not complacency or apathy. Yet there is little desire for such diligence and the logical conclusions that must be drawn after rightly dividing are indeed blasphemed. Yet God has warned that if we learn to rightly divide we will be approved of God and if we don't we will be ashamed.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth*. 2Tim. 2:15*

- 7 In order to rightly divide we must understand simple and basic principles, many of which are scorned by the multitudes today. There is so much error and false teaching about God's commands. The most damaging are:

- (A) Those who wrote the Bible were not inspired.
- (B) All commands are open to man's interpretation, modified to fit changing attitudes and morals.
- (C) Taking one command and pushing it so far it violates other commands.
- (D) Commands giving an exact way to fulfill are set aside in favor of a general command.

- 8 There is no better example of how God views those who modify His specific commands to fit their own needs than king Saul. As is often the case there were deeper reasons that led to the command being so specific. In this case, this was an act of judgment by God that needed to be fulfilled exactly as it was given.

"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, 18 how he met you on the way and **attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary**; and he **did not fear God*. **19 Therefore it shall be, when the Lord your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget**. Deut. 25:17-19*

9 God reminded him of this fact before He sent him in this mission. God wanted Saul to understand why this command was given.

*Thus says the Lord of hosts: **I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. 3 Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.**" 1Sam 15:2-3*

10 Even with the knowledge of what God sought, Saul did not make it the focus of his journey. He did the part of the command that he felt was reasonable. But when it came to doing the things he thought were unreasonable (destroying the best) he changed the command.

*But Saul and the people spared Agag and the **best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.** 1 Sam 15:9*

11 This is so important to understand. Most of the commands that have been modified in the box above were changed for exactly the same reason. God gave a specific command but they choose to filter it in order to make it make sense to them. It is a sad legacy of the human race that started with Eve in the garden. Saul was unwilling to do God's will. He chose instead to do His will. God spoke strongly about this problem, it would have saved Saul. It is a fundamental principle that will still save us today.

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;** 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 **Do not be wise in your own eyes;** Fear the Lord and depart from evil. Pr. 3:5-7*

12 Even before they returned God made His feelings known. God saw this as an act of rebellion and a refusal to keep His command. While man sees a partial fulfillment as pleasing to God, God has always revealed that if any part is left out, it is an act of rebellion. These "minor" modifications (in the eyes of men) are perceived very differently by God. God saw it first as Saul turning back from following Him and secondly "he did not perform My commands.

*Now the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, 11 **"I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments."** 1Sam. 15:10-11*

13 There are so many examples of this today. It is why men leave out baptism from salvation and why the worship has been modified with (instrumental music). It is also why men have allowed women to speak and take dominion and why they teach "once saved always saved." The fact that God has clearly revealed His will on such matters does not lead them to repentance. In their eyes if we like it God will like it too.

14 Even the inspired message from the prophet Samuel do not change Saul's opinion. He won't even take responsibility for it. It was the people who did this, ignoring the fact that he could have commanded otherwise.

*Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the Lord! **I have performed the commandment of the Lord.**" 14 But Samuel said, "**What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?**" 15 And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for **the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.**" 1 Sam 15:13-15*

15 Multitudes today share Saul's sentiments. If it accomplishes some good then God will be pleased. Many are making changes in God's word to accommodate the wishes and needs of the sinners in this generation. They think that enlarging the church by easing God's commands will meet with His approval. Saul learned otherwise and so will all today who do the same.

*Now **the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.'** 19 **Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the Lord?"** 1Sam. 15:18-19*

16 Regardless of benefits, if one of God's commands must be modified or changed to accomplish it, it is doing evil in the sight of the Lord. Saul had a specific mission, a mission he chose to change and then fulfill to his satisfaction. God saw it as evil. Nothing has changed today.

***I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal."** 1 Sam 15:20-21*

17 Saul made a grave error. He thought that going on a mission and changing God's purpose would be overlooked. He made two excuses. First it was not him, but the people and second that they were still going to be destroyed, only in sacrifice to the Lord.

18 The principle that are set forth will be the undoing of multitudes since. To this day there are many who share Saul's view. If good will come, we can set aside one part or even the whole of God's command.

Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to

obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. 1Sam. 15:22-23

- 19 Many of the divisions today came about because this is ignored. It is not the difficulty of understanding the command, or even the need of examples and / or logic and deduction. It is because man has a found better way (in his own eyes) and expects God to accept it. This is wrong on two levels. First because to obey and heed is far better than whatever results might arise. Second, because God sees any act of rebellion (a refusal to do everything God commands) in exactly the same way as he sees the folly of divination (seeking future knowledge through superstition). He also sees rebellion (setting aside any part of God's command) as the worship of idols.
- 20 A look at the role of women in the church today reveals we are still facing the same issues as Saul. God has given a command to all the churches that does not sit well in today's views and attitudes. Women are just as qualified and just as capable as men. There is no reason that men can see to keep them from preaching and teaching. But God said no. For those who trust in the Lord with all their heart this is enough. For those who feel that they can change God's command to fit today's attitudes it is not enough. They will learn as Saul did.

*as in all the churches of the saints. 34 **Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. 35 And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. 1 Cor 14:33-35***

Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. 12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. 1 Tim 2:11-15

Questions

1. How many churches are estimated to be in the world today? (1)
2. What does the Catholic church say about the cause of divisions and how to solve them? (2)
3. How did the early churches keep dissent and division from happening? (3)
4. How did Jesus warn that we must not be taken in by these things? (4)
5. When these things take root what do people say about the word of truth? (5)
6. What method and what attitude toward it does God demand? (6)
7. What are some of the most difficult problems that must be overcome? (7)
8. What example has God left for us in the Old Testament to learn? (8)
9. What did God want Saul to know before He sent him to fulfill his command? (9)
10. What was more important to Saul than God's mission? (10)

11. What trap did Saul fall into when he sought to make sense of God's command? (10)
12. What started with Eve and has plagued all her children since ? (11)
13. What passage in Proverbs did God give to help us avoid this temptation? (11)
14. How did Saul see his partial obedience? How did God see it? (12)
15. What are some of the examples of partial obedience today? (13)
16. What did Samuel say the bleating of the sheep proved? (14)
17. Would Saul take responsibility and repent and admit his wrong? (14)
18. If it accomplishes something good how do people see rebellion today? (15)
19. Does Saul finally admit they should have been destroyed? Does he repent? (16)
20. What two excuses did Saul put forth? (17)
21. What two grievous sins does Samuel say Saul and all those like him commit? (18)
22. Why are even the most simple commands set aside with a good conscience? (19)
23. What two things does God see that removes any hope of approval? (19)
24. Did the division over women in the church arise because the command is too hard to understand? (20)
25. Are women just as qualified and capable as men to do the work of preaching? (20)
26. In today's world, what is the only reason why women should not be preachers and elders? (20)

The Inspiration of the Bible

- 1 One of the most far reaching and damaging of all the controversies facing disciples today is the inspiration of the Bible. The Bible's claim that all the words from Genesis 1 and continuing until Revelation 22 were written by the Holy Spirit is rejected by multitudes.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2Tim. 3:16-17

- 2 The passage is clear and easy to understand. Every verse is profitable for doctrine. If it is in the Bible it is the foundation of all true doctrine. All reproof over things that are wrong, all correction over false teaching, and all true instruction in how to be righteous are in the Scriptures. Not a single thing in the Bible originated from the minds of men. Yet this passage, accepted and revered by devout Christians down through the centuries is now a passage of controversy, and one of the greatest obstacles to unity among those who call themselves Jesus' disciples.
- 3 There is a catastrophic consequence to rejecting inspiration. Since Jesus promised it and the Holy Spirit proclaimed that He fulfilled that promise, it impugns their integrity and veracity. To doubt inspiration is to doubt Jesus, the Holy Spirit and God. To speak evil of anything in the Scriptures is to speak evil of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Finally to reject anything written by those Jesus sent is to reject Him and if we reject Him in this manner, we also reject God.

He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." Lk. 10:16

"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. Mt. 10:40

- 4 Jesus promised His apostles that God the Father would send the Holy Spirit to teach all things, bring to remembrance all that Jesus had said, and guide them into all truth. If we don't trust these words, we don't trust Jesus or God the Father. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would reveal all truth and that His disciples would be sanctified by that truth.

"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. John 14:25-27

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. John 16:12-13

They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. Jn. 17:16-17

- 5 Jesus explained exactly how this inspiration would work. He assured them that even in the midst of their enemies, the Holy Spirit would give them the words to defend themselves. They would have no need to formulate any part of their defense. They would not be speaking at all. The "Holy Spirit," "the Spirit of your Father" would be doing all the talking. They had no role at all.

But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; 20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. Mt. 10:19-20

But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Mark 13:11-12

- 6 This is exactly how all their preaching and writing was accomplished. Every sermon, every class, every letter and every book. The Holy Spirit did not allow them to have any input in the finished product. They had no way to reveal what they had never seen or heard, there was nothing they could add. The only wisdom they could bring was the useless wisdom of this age.

However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory. 1Cor. 2:6-7

- 7 There are three distinct stages for truth to get from heaven into the written pages of the Bible. **First**, it was revealed to them by directly placing them into their minds. **Second**, the Holy Spirit gave every

spoken and written word without any interference or input from the human authors. **Third**, when all future disciples read it, these Scriptures are so comprehensive and accurate that they will have exactly the same understanding that those who were inspired had. There was nothing lost in the transmission of the truth in God's mind to the things written by men on earth.

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. 1Cor. 2:9-10

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1Cor. 2:9-14

how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), Eph. 3:3-5

- 8 These passages ought to end the discussion. Yet for many "disciples" they are just words that can't be proven. They argue that it was the apostles who put these words into Scripture so we would have to accept what they said. To them it was just another cunningly devised fable. Peter denied this! There are no cunningly devised fables in Scripture. Those who begin this inquiry, convinced that the apostles were liars and deceivers, are not Jesus' disciples at all! For if the apostles made these things up, Jesus is not the Christ the Son of the Living God and the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with their writings. This isn't something we can pick and choose. It is all or nothing. Either it is all inspired from the Holy Spirit or none of it is.

For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 2Pet. 1:16-17

- 9 Even in the times of the apostles and prophets not everyone believed this. But those who rejected it would join those who are "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2Tim. 3:7).

- 10 Those who reject even a single teaching in Jesus' word revealed by His apostles and prophets as uninspired doctrine will never be His disciples who know the truth and are made free. Those who reject the source of all truth will never be able to find it. Jesus promised He could only be with those disciples who observe **everything** He has commanded up until the end of the age.

"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jn. 8:31-32

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Mt. 28:18-20

- 11 All who are truly spiritually minded will accept that everything Paul wrote were commands of the Lord. Only those who are ignorant are foolish enough to set something aside because it doesn't fit with the wisdom of this age. Nothing in the gospel Paul preached is according to man. He did not receive it from man. It all came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. 1:11-12

If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. 38 But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. 1Cor. 14:37-38

- 12 Paul thanked God for those who accepted that what He preached was the Word of God. Can he thank God for you?

For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. 1Th. 2:13-14

- 13 Conclusion: When we hold the Bible in our hands we are reading the words of God. Each word chosen and placed on the page by the Holy Spirit. Every word, every sentence, including both the grammar, the reasoning and the words that hold them were from the Holy Spirit and not from

the human authors. This is the truth and it perfectly describes the book we call the Bible.

Questions

1. What doctrinal controversy today is among the most far reaching in dividing “*disciples*?” (1)
2. Did God reveal that everything in the Bible is inspired? Which verse teach this? (2)
3. What is the catastrophic consequence of rejecting the inspiration of the Scriptures? (3)
4. If we reject any Scripture as uninspired what does Jesus reveal is the consequence? (3)
5. What did Jesus promise His disciple He would do after returning to heaven? (4)
6. When that promise was fulfilled could any truth have been left out or any error added? (4)
7. When Jesus explained inspiration, how much effort would they have to exert? (5)
8. Did the Holy Spirit ever allow any input from those who revealed His word? (6)
9. What was the only type of wisdom man can add to God’s word? (6)
10. What are the three distinct stages for truth to begin in the mind of God and end in our mind? (7)

11. While those who believe Jesus and love the truth accept these things without question how do some still see the writings of the apostles and prophets concerning inspiration? (8)
12. If inspiration is a fable, other things must also be seen as fables? (8)
13. Although many fervently study, if they reject inspiration what will they never learn? (9)
14. What two core Scriptures are violated if we reject even one doctrine revealed by the apostles? (10)
15. Who are the only disciples Jesus can have fellowship until the end of this age? (10)
16. What do all who are truly spiritually minded accept about all of Paul's writings? (11)
17. What does the Holy Spirit reveal about those who reject Paul's writings as commands? (11)
18. Is there even one thing Paul preached or wrote about that he learned from other sources? (11)
19. What did Paul thank God for in those disciples in Thessalonica? (12)
20. Can Paul thank God for us today, especially for your own attitude toward inspiration? (12)
21. When we hold the Bible in our hands what are we truly reading? (13)

The Inspiration of the Bible — Logic and Necessary Inferences

- 1 As we learn more about the amazing nature of the Bible, it becomes a powerful pillar for a strong faith. While most books are written by one author, the Bible was written by about 40 different authors and took over 1500 years to complete. Moses wrote the first five books in 1500-1400 BC (Deut. 31:9). John wrote the last book of the Bible about 90 AD (Rev. 1:1). These authors lived in different countries and eras. Moses was raised in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, Ezra in Medo-Persia, and Paul in Rome. Some like Moses and Daniel, were highly educated, (Acts 7:22; Dan. 1:5, 19-21), while the apostles were called “*uneducated and unlearned men.*” (Acts 4:13).
- 2 Human textbooks must be revised often, but the Bible has never needed it. The account began over 3,900 years ago with the creation and early history of man. Although theories of men have come and gone, this account has never been discredited. It also reveals the theme of the Bible. God is our Creator and Father and the creator of all that is good, just and right. Satan is an enemy, who lied and brought sin, death, suffering and sorrow into this world. In love, wisdom, and compassion, God revealed His plan to save us. A descendant of Adam and Eve would bring salvation and destroy the power of the Devil. (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14).
- 3 With this promise, one of the most amazing and unique elements of the Bible is introduced: Prophecy! The manner in which God introduced prophecy reveals the grave risk it would pose if only men were writing it.
And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?' — 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. Deut 18:21-22
- 4 Only God, who can see the future and perfectly foretell what will occur could make such a statement. An entire book must be rejected as false if one prophecy doesn't come to pass. All the prophecies came to pass exactly as God said they would!
- 5 God promised Abraham, He would make of him a great nation and that one man from this nation would bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 12:1-3). Moses added that He would be a great lawgiver just like him. (Deut. 18:15-18). He would come from the tribe of Judah, through the lineage of David, (Gen. 49:10; 2Sam. 7:12-16), and be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2). When Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, God foretold that in the future there would be three world empires. He identified two as Medo-Persia, and Greece (Dan. 2:36-45; 7:19-22), then revealed the Messiah would be born and set up a great kingdom that would never be destroyed, during the reign of the still future third empire (Rome).
- 6 In a possible contradiction, it was foretold he would be rejected by Israel and executed. God would overrule this by raising him from the dead. (Isa. 53; Ps. 16:9-10). This is one of the most complex elements of the Scriptures and many proofs have been offered to validate it. There are over 200 prophecies about Jesus. For centuries skeptics argued these prophecies were too precise and were therefore written after the events occurred. Yet the Dead Sea scrolls, discovered in 1946-1956, confirmed that Daniel and Isaiah had been written long before.
- 7 If the Bible were written by human authors, this would be impossible. No one can predict events 1,000's of years into the future with 100% accuracy. Think of it! Alone, Moses must create a foundation that all future writers would have to build on with perfect unity and accuracy. This is not only amazing and extraordinary, it is impossible! If they were written by men, it would be easy to tear the Scriptures apart, showing their flaws, errors, and inaccuracies. Multitudes of skeptics and antagonists have tried, and even predicted their success, yet in the midst of our age of information, Scripture has yet to be proven to contradict itself.
- 8 It is therefore a necessary inference that the existence and accuracy of the Bible demands inspiration. “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (God breathed).*” (2Tim. 3:16-17). Every verse from Genesis to Revelation has been written by the Holy Spirit. “*No prophecy came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*” (2Pet. 1:21). That this is the only logical and reasonable explanation. What other conclusion can explain 40 human authors living 1500 years apart accomplishing this.
- 9 The most difficult for some to accept are the things mentioned in the Old Testament that are impossible without God's direct intervention. The account of the creation in six literal days. A serpent speaking to Eve. The flood in the days of Noah, the ten plagues in the days of Moses and the events at Mount Sinai. A talking donkey, Joshua asking God to stop the sun, Elisha raising someone from the dead or Shadrach Meshach and Abednego living through the fiery furnace. Yet the inspiration of the Scripture does not allow us to reject any account within its pages. Regardless of the amazing nature of the event, it did happen and we must believe it did!

(10) Where is the necessary inference in all this? First, if we believe in God, we can't say He couldn't or didn't do them. To reject anything in the Scriptures requires our assessment that God could not do it. Rejecting any account in the entire Bible is to reject the existence of God. Second,

if we believe Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God who is now at the right hand exalted, we must believe everything He said is absolute truth. Jesus, was the Word who became flesh. *"All things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made."* (Jn. 1:1-3).

(11) When Jesus spoke of *"the beginning of the creation which God created,"* (Mk. 13:19), He was not only an eyewitness confirming it as the truth, but an active participant in every part of it. He witnessed, and took part in the creation of Adam and Eve (Mt. 19:4-5) and saw Adam and Eve fall into sin and be banished from the garden of Eden. He was also an eyewitness as *"Noah entered the ark,"* and the *"the flood came and took them all away."* (Lk. 17:25). He confirmed that *"on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all,"* (Lk. 17:29).

(12) Jesus had first hand knowledge. When asked about seeing Abraham. Jesus said *"before Abraham was, I AM."* (Jn. 8:58). Jesus was an eye witness to every event recorded in the Bible! He was there as each book was written. He saw the original words and when He came to this earth, He accepted them all without question. If any myths or fables had crept in, He had many opportunities to reveal it. He spoke confidently of Jonah in the belly of the fish for three days (Mt. 12:40), of Elijah helping the widow (with food and raising her son), (Lk. 4:26), and cleansing Naaman of leprosy (Lk. 6:27). Though amazing and even extraordinary, Jesus confirmed them!

(13) This is our greatest assurance it is all inspired. Since *"Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God,"* (Mt. 16:16), and *"God has made Jesus ... both Lord and Christ,"* (Acts 2:36), we must trust Him. The integrity of the Bible, all the historical accounts in the Bible, and the truth that Jesus is both Christ and Son of God are linked together with chains of logic that can't be broken. If we don't believe the Scriptures He affirmed are true, then is Jesus truly the Son of God?

(14) There are grave consequences if we doubt these truths. Consider the domino affect to the validity of the New Testament. If we can't fully accept any of the words of Jesus as recorded in the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), then four of the books of the NT would no longer Scripture. The feeding of the 5000, healing the man born blind, raising Lazarus from the dead and Jesus own resurrection must be true or Jesus is not the Son of God!

(15) Peter spoke of Noah and the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Balaam's talking donkey as facts (2Pet. 2:5-7; 15-16). Paul spoke of the opening of the Red Sea, and all the divine dealings with Israel in the wilderness as facts. (1Cor. 10:1-11). He proclaimed that Eve did speak to the serpent in the garden of Eden (1Tim. 2:11-15). Paul proclaimed (Eph. 4:3-4) and Peter affirmed (2Pet. 3:15-16). that their writings were inspired Scripture. We can't pick through their writings and select what we like, agree with, or makes sense to us. If they are inspired then it is all true. Think about it! If we can't accept the four gospels, the thirteen books Paul wrote and the two books of Peter, we are rejecting 19 books of the New Testament. But it wouldn't end there.

(16) Hebrews also spoke of these events as facts. *"Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death,"* *"Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household."* (Heb 11:1-30). Sarah *"bore a child when she was past the age,"* *"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned."* *"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down."* These are only a few of the portions of Hebrews that affirm the inspiration of the Old Testament.

(17) The rest of the NT fares the same: James said: *"Elijah ... prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit."* The gospel of John, the three letters he wrote (1, 2, 3 John) and Revelation would also be impacted. If we can't trust that Jesus turned 120 - 180 gallons of water into wine, fed 5000 with a few loaves and fish, healed a man born blind and raised Lazarus from the dead, then all John's writings are not inspired. Acts records Jesus' ascension and Peter's affirmation of His resurrection. It records Peter's healing the lame man, raising Dorcas from the dead and healing the sick. Luke also recorded the sermons, journeys and miracles of Paul. He also raised the dead, healed the lame, struck Elymas the sorcerer blind. So Acts would also be rejected.

(18) So what does that leave us? By doubting any of the divine interventions recorded in the OT, we are also doubting that all the books in the NT. Doubt begins as a trickle, and soon becomes a flood that sweeps it all away. Christianity becomes a hollow religion, based solely upon myths and fables.

(19) The Holy Spirit was in complete control over what and to whom it was revealed. From the apostles He chose four to write 21 books of the New Testament: Matthew (1), John (5), Paul (13), and Peter (2). From the prophets, He chose four who wrote 5 books: Mark (1), Luke (2), James (1) and Jude (1), the human author of Hebrews (1) was never identified. Without these books, no one knows anything about God or His truth: *"no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God."* Those thus chosen by the Holy Spirit were given the unique ability to *"know the things that have*

been freely given to us by God.” The end result: “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches.”

1. How many men wrote the Bible and How many years from start to completion to write it? (1)
2. Did they all live in the same culture? What were the differences in education (1)
3. Who did God promise would come to destroy the devil and save man? (2)
4. What is the amazing and unique element added into the Bible? (3)
5. What was the grave risk that prophesy posed? (4)
6. Were these prophecies so vague anyone could fulfill them? List a few of the Specific prophecies. (5)
7. What the seemingly impossible contradiction that only God could fulfill? (6)
8. Is it possible for man to predict future events with 100% accuracy 1000's of years in the future? (7)
9. Because of all of these amazing things in the Bible what is the only logical conclusion? (8)
10. What are the most difficult things the Holy Spirit placed in the Bible for man to believe? (9)
11. What does inspiration demand that we do if something in the Bible did not really happen? (9)
12. What are the two necessary inferences in these things? (10)
13. Who was the eyewitness to everything written in the Old Testament? (11)
14. Not only was Jesus an eyewitness of the creation but what else was He? (11)
15. How did Jesus answer when the Jews asked him if he had seen Abraham? (12)

16. Did Jesus ever criticize or discredit anything written in the Old Testament? (12)
17. Did Jesus confirm many of the accounts in the OT that people calling themselves disciples reject today? List a few of them. (12)
18. Can Jesus truly be the Son of God, telling only the truth, if any of these events did not really happen? (13)
19. What are some of the two grave consequences that occur if we reject miracles and interventions of God? (14)
20. What amazing things written in the OT did Peter confirm? (15)
21. What amazing things written in the OT did Paul confirm? (15)
22. Can we select what we will accept in their writings and remain a true disciple of Jesus? (15)
23. If the Bible is inspired can there be any contradictions or errors? (15)
24. What does Hebrews add about some of the amazing accounts in the OT? (16)
25. What did James add? (17)
26. What did John and Acts add to this list? (17)
27. If we doubt or reject any of the accounts of God's powerful interventions what does it do to the NT Scriptures? (18)
28. How many apostles did the Holy Spirit choose to write the NT? How many books did they write? (19)
29. How many prophets did the Holy Spirit choose to write the NT? How many books did they write? (19)