

# Thy Word Is Truth

## THE DIVINE TREASURE OF THE SCRIPTURES

*"The Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation"*  
—2 Timothy 3:15.

IF there is any book in the world that holds the key to life and happiness, it is the Bible. If the Bible does not do that, nothing does; and man's case is hopeless: an animal existence; an animal end.

The Bible makes tremendous claims: divine inspiration; infallibility; revelation of man's origin and all his meaningful history, of the purpose of his existence, of his eternal future for good or ill, according as he submits without question and obeys without reservation the asserted universal authority of this Book.

The Bible is a purifying Book. It is a comforting, uplifting, inspiring Book. No one who truly studies and believes and *obeys* it could possibly be ever depressed or unhappy or dissatisfied or anxious about *anything*. It is the complete cure for all mental disharmonies: these are of sin and the flesh. Compared to it, *all* other supposed sources of relief and guidance are broken crutches and empty cisterns.

When we observe how the great churches of our day have cast aside the Bible as the divine, infallible guide to belief and conduct, and what a sordid, immoral mess they have sunk into as a consequence, we are more than ever impressed with the vital necessity of the pure Word of God as an absolute authority to keep man from sinking to the lowest bestiality and folly, as we see all around us today.

The Bible, prayerfully and consistently studied and obeyed, makes anyone better, wiser, and happier. It changes him from a dying, animal creature of the passing present, to a living, spiritually-minded child of God, related to the eternal future.

The strongest proof of the Bible's divinity is the personal experience of its light and power and wisdom and unassailable joy. It is truly a light shining in a dark place, and the more we prayerfully devote ourselves to it, the more irresistibly this will be impressed upon us.

The Bible is the *only* sound, dependable, unchanging thing in an unsound, undependable, and ever-changing world.

We must go to the Bible for ourselves. And we must be prepared to give much prayerful time and effort to the endeavor. It must be the major—the only real and deep—interest of our life.

The Bible means what it says, subject to the ordinary common-sense rules of language. The only special equipment we need to understand it is a deep love of God and a humble, teachable heart.

Truly it contains symbols, and mysteries, and figures of speech. But the vast bulk of it—*especially the commands concerning our actions and conduct and transformation of character from animal to spiritual*—is very plain and clear: painfully plain and clear.

The principal requirement to the understanding of any one part is a familiarity with the whole. If we are not prepared to take the time and make the effort to read and study it *all*, then we have little hope of properly understanding *any* of it, for mainly its explanation and unfolding comes from itself, with loving familiarity.

The literal and simple part must be accepted and *obeyed*. THEN the symbolic and deeper parts will gradually open up, in complete harmony with the literal. There is no other way to the knowledge that gives life. God is certainly not going to reveal His deeper things to those who refuse or neglect to obey His elementary commands.

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The Bible claims to give a complete and authoritative answer to man's origin and destiny. It claims to speak of an eternal future condition of unalloyed joy, and how man can attain it. It claims to speak with absolute authority. It demands absolute obedience by all. Over 2000 times it declares: "*THUS SAITH THE LORD!*"

No one need waste his time on the Bible who is not sincerely prepared to submit unreservedly to what he finds, and follow wherever it leads. God has no time or place for fools who merely want to play with the idea of salvation as an amusing hobby, while clinging to the things of the world.

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The great trouble with the world is SIN. This is at the root of every evil, sorrow, sickness and death. Sin is the opposite of obedience. Obedience is doing God's will. Sin is ignoring or disobeying God's will and doing our own will, the evil will of the flesh. Sin says, "I will do as I please." Obedience and wisdom say, "I will do as God wills."

We find within us the motions of sin, just as the Scriptures say: pride, envy, selfishness, greed, inconsideration, irritability, impatience, anger, cruelty. We see the earth filled with wickedness and violence and oppression and crime. Paul's lament—

*"I find a law in my members...a law of sin...when I would do good, evil is present with me"* (Rm. 7:21-23).

—is the universal experience of any who have thought on the matter at all. *Only the Bible explains these things*, and tells us how to recognize them and overcome them, and at last become completely free from them by a glorious physical change.

We freely recognize, if we have any sense at all, that kindness and patience and love and unselfish consideration for others would make a far happier world for all: but we find these obviously good and desirable qualities do not come naturally to us, but the very opposite. They are contrary to nature. *The Bible tells us why*, and it alone gives the all-sufficient and all-powerful solution.

The Bible is God-manifestation: God manifesting Himself to man, drawing man to Him, teaching man how to approach God, and enjoy God, and become like God, and be forever with God; teaching man how to become in his turn a glorious manifestation of God.

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The Bible is *one* book, one inseparable unity. No one can possibly understand the New Testament who rejects or neglects the Old, or who thinks the Old has served its purpose and need not be studied.

Christ and the apostles constantly referred to the Old Testament as an infallible divine authority. The New Testament speaks with commendation of some who, hearing Paul preach the *Gospel of salvation*, examined the *Old Testament* to see if what he was saying was true (Acts 17). Jesus said that if men did not believe what Moses wrote, they could not believe him (John 5:47). When Paul said that the Scriptures were able to "*make wise unto salvation*" (2 Tim. 3:15), he was speaking of the Old Testament. He said that he preached (Acts 26:22)—

*"None other things than those the Prophets and Moses did say should come."*

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Though written by 40 different men over a period of 1600 years, the Bible has one unified theme: God's dealings with the earth and mankind as He gradually works toward the fulfillment of His purpose—to fill the whole earth with His glory: everything beautiful and in harmony with His Own perfection and holiness. *With* the Bible, we walk in light and understanding in relation to this purpose. *Without* the Bible, we walk in darkness and ignorance that ends in death.

Throughout the Old Testament, beginning in the Garden of Eden, there is a continuous chain of reference to a Deliverer who was to come. He is foreshown to be both all-powerful in the earth, universally obeyed, ruling with an iron rod—and *also weak, despised, and rejected*.

Jesus, after his death in weakness and resurrection to power, explains this strange paradox and apparent contradiction to his wondering disciples—

*"O fools and slow of heart to believe **all** that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have **suffered these things** AND to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Lk.24:25-27).*

The entire Law of Moses is an intricate and elaborate foreshadowing of the coming sacrificial Savior. The whole book of Psalms presents him and his glorious work and overcoming. The tremendous prophetic power of Isa.53 cannot be avoided or evaded. The more we think on it, the more marvelously powerful it will become—

A faithful servant of God, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, brought as a sacrificial lamb to slaughter, bearing the sin of many, cut off from the land of the living, making his life an offering for sin—*then rising to triumph and victory, seeing the results and being satisfied, prolonging his days*, because he had poured out his life unto death.

To a godly and spiritual mind, that chapter alone, in the light of the record of Christ, is sufficient to stamp the Bible as divine.

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God declares flatly that the world and the universe as we see it is *positive evidence* of His reality, power and divinity, and that men are absolutely WITHOUT EXCUSE, if they cannot perceive it (Rom. 1:20). And surely any intelligent man unspoiled by worldly wisdom and philosophy and the childish absurdities of Evolution must see that this is so.

And if there is a God, as the Creation positively proves, and if He has made an intelligent and responsible creature like man, it is a practically inevitable conclusion that there would be given a message from God to man: a message of revelation and instruction, exactly as we find the Bible to be. For there not to be such a message, under the circumstances, would be a marvel indeed. Man has such a potential for good or for evil that it is incredible that an obviously wise and powerful Creator would just make him and then turn him loose without any guidance or instruction.

The Bible is the only book with any serious claim to be that message.

The modern pagan religion of Evolution asks us to believe on faith that marvelous and incredibly intricate and interwoven design has just happened by blind chance, countless millions of times over. This weird "explanation" to try to get rid of the reality and authority of God is just asking too much of credulity.

Consider the bee at work in the hive, each living but a few weeks, each born with the instinct to gather honey, not for itself but for others. Or the individual ant laboring in the

vast anthill, doing its own specific and essential task for the whole. Or a rainbow, or a sunset. Or an atom of matter—any atom—an infinitesimal speck of matter, every one loaded with a bound-in concentration of almost incalculable energy. Or a star in the vast universe—

Then babble about blind, powerless, purposeless, futureless, hopeless "evolution" *creating* all these marvels! How can mankind be so thoroughly besotted? To the spiritual mind, the existence of one thing alone—beauty—brings the whole rickety contraption of evolution crashing down. Evolution—cold, dead, robot, mindless evolution—has no place in its dark imaginary world for beauty. And the apex of all beauty is the "beauty of holiness," of which evolution knows and cares nothing. "*The fool has said in his heart, There is no God*" (Ps. 14:1).

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The Bible is a Jewish book. The Old Testament has been revered by the Jews and meticulously preserved by them as their national history and national treasure for at least a provable 2000 years. And yet from beginning to end it continually condemns them as wicked and stiffnecked and murderous and disobedient, and plainly foretells from the very beginning their long worldwide scattering and terrible suffering because of their inveterate wickedness. The Bible has hardly one good word to say about them as a nation, except their final purification and blessing by God of a small purged remnant.

All of today's principal modern alphabets—even Russian—are derived from the Hebrew alphabet in which the Jews, by divine inspiration, were writing beautiful poetry and deep majestic prose, authentic world history and eternal principles of wisdom, while all today's great nations were naked, painted, savage, illiterate barbarians.

The Jew is the center of the purpose of God with man and the earth. After 4000 years of history, the Jew continues as distinct and separate a people as ever. After 2000 years of worldwide scattering and homelessness he is again a nation in the earth, different from all others: the center of world controversy, sitting at the strategic crossroads of the globe.

Take away the Jew, and the whole world picture would change completely. The Mideast, with its crucial oil wealth, would still be firm and strong on the side of Britain and US, and Russia would have no foothold of hate and discontent on which to build her growing power and influence in the Mideast and Mediterranean and Africa. But Israel is the key: Jerusalem is the burdensome stone (Zech.12:3).

Take away the Jew, and there would be no cement to unite Catholic Europe, godless Russia, and Jew-hating Arab in the latter-day coalition against the mountains of Israel (Ez. 38-39).

The history of the Jews—*God's hand* in the history of the Jews—is the key to the understanding of the Bible. From the very beginning of that history, 4000 years ago, there have been many detailed prophecies concerning them. The vast bulk have already been fulfilled; some concerning the "last days" are in process of fulfillment or still to be fulfilled.

Those that have been fulfilled have been fulfilled *very literally and specifically*: their continual wickedness, the repeatedly foretold punishments, the final rejection of their long-expected Messiah, their scattering, their long period of suffering, their continued blindness, the desolation of their land, their continued separate entity as a people always prominent in the eyes of the world.

And finally, in our own highly privileged generation—before our eyes—the preliminary aspects of their final regathering and reestablishment in their own land. The few remaining prophecies—the inseparable final phase of this long unbroken chain of fulfilled prophecy—

will equally be fulfilled literally and specifically.

God chose Abraham, the father of the Jewish race, and declared that through him and his seed He would work out His glorious purpose of filling the earth with His glory.

Through the Jews came God's holy Word of salvation and life; His marvelous manifestation of Himself to mankind; His Son, the Head and Savior of mankind, the future King of the whole earth.

In their wickedness and disobedience, the Jews (as foretold) rejected their God-given Savior, though he came to them fulfilling *all* the prophecies, manifesting all the attributes of God, and doing works none other man had ever done before. Then—and by means of Jewish rejection—in God's wisdom and foreknowledge, the sacrificial aspect of Christ's great work of salvation was accomplished.

For 2000 years the Jews, his own people, have rejected him in bitter blindness, and have suffered in consequence the dreadful judgments of God. But in our own day we have seen a wonderful and long-foretold change. Israel has been reborn after nearly 2000 years of political death and burial. Their initial regathering is, as foretold, in continued blindness and disobedience and wickedness.

If there ever was the slightest shred of excuse for rejecting or denying the divinity of the Bible, there is no longer now. The reborn Jewish nation literally shouts out its witness to the divine origin of the holy Word of God. Jerusalem, God's city, the "City of the Great King" (Mt.5:35), was to be, in Christ's own words (Lk. 21:24)—

*"Trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."*

The sign of the ending of Gentile times was to be the rebirth and regathering of the nation of Israel. Israel is being regathered; and Jerusalem at the moment has for the first time in 2000 years escaped from the downtreading Gentile heel, though so far it is but a precarious escape, and the Gentiles, in an unholy Catholic-Arab-Russian alliance, are scheming mightily to get it under their desolating feet again.

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Concerning the latter days, the prophet Ezekiel was shown in vision a valley full of very dry bones. He was told they represented the nation of Israel, and he was asked—"*Can these bones live?*"

And God told him in answer—

*"I will take the children of Israel from among the nations whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all" (Ez. 37:21-22).*

The first two points—gathering into the land and establishing them there as a nation—have been *preliminarily* fulfilled before our eyes in very recent history. The third point—"One king to them all"—still remains to be fulfilled. Ps.102:15-16 declares—

*"When the Lord shall **build up Zion**, He shall appear in His glory...So the nations shall fear the Name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory."*

Israel's regathering is the great sign of the return of Jesus Christ to the earth—

*"God shall send Jesus Christ...whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Ac. 3:20).*

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The historical accuracy of the Bible right back to the beginning—4000 years before Christ—has been repeatedly confirmed by archeological discovery, while *man's* records for

that period are a pitiful jumble of legends and myths. Until the advent of archeology, man's knowledge of the past, outside of the Bible, went just a few centuries before Christ, and was very limited and erroneous even that far. Up to a little over 100 years ago, the most pitiful rubbish was gravely peddled by the learned of the world as ancient history. One has only to glance through the long-famous "Rollin's Ancient History" to show that. It is not so long since "educated" men solemnly denied that there ever had been such a city as Babylon.

But amid all man's abysmal ignorance and darkness, the Bible's clear light went back 4000 years before Christ in lucid, specific, accurate detail. As archeology has gradually dug up and pieced together the past, more and more it has confirmed the detailed accuracy of the Bible and exposed the errors and presumptions of man, especially in many cases where the wise of the world denied Bible truth.

Many now well-known figures of ancient history—as Belshazzar, Sargon, Pul, the specific Egyptian Pharaohs, etc.—were completely unknown outside the Bible, and their existence denied, until the spade of the archeologist confirmed the Bible and silenced the critics: silenced them, that is, on those specific points, for the flesh never learns wisdom but merely shifts its attack. The great Hittite Empire, once the rival of Egypt and Babylon, was not long ago so completely unknown that men scoffed at Bible references to them as a strong and feared people.

According to the chronology indicated in the Biblical records, the creation of man works out very close to 4000 BC. This is just about the time that man's own now archeologically *proven* history starts, as contrasted to blind guesses and speculations of millions of years. No written records or inscriptions have ever been found that can be dated before 3500 BC; and these oldest records come, of course, from the Mesopotamian valley, where the Bible says man began.

It is a very strange fact, if man has existed as claimed for hundreds of thousands of years, that he suddenly learned to write and make records just after the time the Bible says he was created, and that he shows up just where the Bible says he was. One is *fact*: the other pure speculation.

Ancient Babylon of 2000 BC had a higher degree of civilization and standard of living than that of Europe up to just a couple of 100 years ago, and higher than most parts of the world today. Babylon and Nineveh were two of the greatest cities of antiquity—perhaps *the* greatest. In their day, they were capitals of world empires, centers of world power. At their zenith of prosperity and pride, the Bible predicted they would be completely desolate.

They so completely disappeared that for centuries, up until a little over 100 years ago their very sites were unknown, and it was denied that they ever existed. Now their locations have been identified and unearthed, and their one-time splendor and magnificence confirmed.

Memphis (*Noph*) and Thebes (*No*), ancient Egypt's two greatest cities, likewise were at their height prophesied to become desolate, abandoned ruins. So they are today, though Egypt remains a nation, again as the Bible said it would (while Babylon would disappear). For centuries the greatest, most powerful, most scientifically-advanced nation of the world, Egypt has become—as *prophesied*—a base nation for the past 2500 years, under the humiliating heel of foreigners: never lifting itself up as a world power again. Fifty times Israel's size, and with more than ten times its population, Egypt—in concert with several other Arab lands—has four times in the past 30 years attacked Israel, and each time has been humiliatingly defeated, though armed to the teeth with the most fearsome weapons Russia's evil mind could supply.

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The Bible puts man's origin in Mesopotamia—the area of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Archeology has increasingly confirmed this *fact*, though on the meager basis of a handful of dubious and widely-scattered bone scraps, the wise of the flesh are frantically trying to put man's origin elsewhere—as central Africa or China.

A century ago it was the fad of science to try to make Egypt the original cradle of mankind and civilization, clutching at unsound assumptions of extreme antiquity, based on wishful misreadings of recently unearthed archeological finds. The advance of factual knowledge through fuller and sounder archeological study has thoroughly exploded that once popular theory. Solid fact and sound research put man's origin in just one place—exactly where the Bible says it was.

It was a popular fad in the scientific community 100 years ago—even as late as the 1890s—to say that writing was not invented till the 8th century BC, so it was impossible for Moses to have written the five books attributed to him. As always, science was wrong, and the Bible right. Objects bearing writing have been found that are universally agreed to date well over 1000 years before Moses. Science has shifted its attack elsewhere. The strange and sad thing is that mankind as a whole does not learn anything from these presumptuous blunders of science. They back away from their discredited arguments against the Bible, but come back with new ones just as silly.

Some may feel this is unfair to “science.” The scientific community, above anything else, wishes to be seen as the essence of reason and rationality and impartial objectivity, far above the common follies of superstition and ignorance. But man hasn't really changed from the days of the alchemists and astrologers. The scientific community generally, as a body, either by conviction or self-interest, worships at the altar of the modern superstition of Evolution—those with doubts suppressing them lest they be “cast out of the synagogue.”

Now, God tells us plainly that any who cannot see evidence of Him all around them in Creation are fools, blind, and without excuse; and furthermore that—*"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."*

Where then does this put the scientific community? The words are not ours but God's. Whatever their mechanical accomplishments or contrivances—and some indeed are spectacular, like going to the moon—still no group standing on the Alice in Wonderland foundation of Evolution can be called wise or intelligent.

Some among them, including some who sadly should know better because of their privileged association with God's Truth, try to combine this modern false god with worship of the true God, attempting to please both sides, but the hybrid offspring they create is more hideous than the original basic atheistic Evolution. The whole philosophy of Evolution is the *"Ascent of Man"* from primeval slime ever upward through the reptile and animal kingdoms, to the glorious, cunning and aggressive biped that proudly and brutally dominates the earth today. The true Bible picture is the very unflattering opposite: that man came from the Divine Hand ‘very good’—a perfect product of Divine workmanship and love; and that by disobedience and willfulness he fell from that position, and has been degenerating through sin and evil ever since to his present pride, wickedness and immorality.

Man has repeatedly had to reverse himself with every advance of true knowledge. The Bible, on the other hand, has been increasingly confirmed as knowledge has creepingly grown. The marvelous theory of the physical world formulated by the genius of Isaac Newton in the 17th century met every then known test and fitted every then known fact; and was considered eternal gospel up to the end of the 19th century. Then Einstein showed

that this long-accepted theory breaks down in the light of the latest observations. And without doubt, if sufficient time permit, another will come along and show how inadequate Einstein's theory is in light of further facts.

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The very continued existence of the Bible, in spite of intense and repeated efforts to destroy it, and especially its yearly multi-million worldwide distribution—always the world's best seller since the very beginning of printing—is in itself a fulfillment of prophecy, and a stamp of the uniqueness of this Book. It has been translated into well over 1000 languages, and more are added each year. It has recently been translated into Somali, which never had a printed alphabet till a few years ago. Sometimes writing has been created for an oral language just to permit the Bible to be written in it. At present 1000s of translators are working on versions in over 500 languages, many of which have never before had Bibles.

Throughout the Bible, as God's message of good news to all mankind, it presumes its own continued existence until its divine work is done—

*"The Word of our God shall stand forever" (Isa. 40:8).*

*"My Word shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please" (Isa. 55:11).*

The Jews were very deeply impressed with the divinity of their Scriptures, and they took measures to preserve their accuracy that were far more comprehensive and rigid than any safeguards applied to any other book in history—repeatedly checking and rechecking even the number of letters, as they made copies. A copy of Isaiah recently found near the Dead Sea, and universally agreed to be 2000 years old, is to all intents and purposes identical with the book as we have it in the King James version.

The Bible, or Scriptures, of Jesus' day was the same as our present Old Testament, containing exactly the same books: no more or less. Jesus and the apostles spoke of this combined volume as the Holy Scriptures; they spoke of it as an inseparable unit; and they accepted and quoted it without question as wholly divinely inspired, word for word—basing fundamental arguments and doctrines on single words, and even parts of words (as singular or plural) (Jn.10:34; Gal.3:16). If it is not divinely inspired, word for word, then the arguments based on it by Christ and the apostles are pointless and powerless. Jesus said:

*"Till heaven and earth pass, **one** jot or **one** tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till ALL be fulfilled" (Matt.5:18).*

The jot was the smallest Hebrew letter. Tittles were the little horns that distinguished one similar letter from another. This is how literally Jesus accepted the Old Testament Scriptures as infallibly inspired. He said again—

*"ALL things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man **shall** be accomplished" (Luke 18:31).*

*"This that is written **MUST** be accomplished" (Lk. 22:37).*

And even more positively and sweepingly he said (Jn.10:35)—

*"The Scripture cannot be broken...**The Scripture CANNOT BE BROKEN.**"*

There is no possibility of doubt as to how Jesus viewed the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God. It is sometimes argued that in the days of his mortal flesh, he just ignorantly adopted current theories. Let us remember he was *immortal* when he said



(Lk. 24:25)—

*"O FOOLS and slow of heart to believe **ALL that the prophets have spoken!**"*

Christ's words and the words of the apostles are absolutely full of Old Testament quotations and allusions, direct and indirect. The whole New Testament is thoroughly steeped in and saturated with the Old. Christ's whole life and death were consciously and deliberately in fulfillment of Scripture. Repeatedly he said—

*"Thus it **MUST** be...that the Scriptures may be fulfilled."*

In his great temptation in the wilderness, at the very beginning of his ministry, his answer and defense always was *"It is written."* This was the power and basis of his overcoming. Regardless of pressure or temptation, **he would do nothing contrary to what was written in the Word.** Could any testimony to its divine authority be stronger?

The first scripture Jesus quoted in his temptation was not chosen by accident, but is deeply significant to our subject—

*"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word** of God" (Lk. 4:4).*

"Every word;" do we get the full significance of that phrase? If the Bible is not wholly inspired, as Christ taught it is, then who knows or is to say what part is *"every word of God;"* and what is not?

Christ always spoke of the Scriptures as the final authoritative standard of appeal. When he said to the Sadducees (Mk.12:24)—

*"Do ye not **therefore** ERR, **because** ye know not the Scriptures?"*

—he is saying that if they *did* know the Scriptures well enough, they would not err. Now, if knowing the Scriptures can preserve a man from error, then the Scriptures themselves must be free from error. An erring thing cannot preserve anyone from error.

Those who do not have a wholly inspired Bible do not have any Bible at all. Who knows where their Bible starts or ends: what part is inspired and what is not? Either it is wholly inspired, as Christ unquestioningly regarded it, or every man writes his own Bible according to his own fallible judgment of what *he* thinks is divine. Instead of being the obedient learner, man becomes the supreme judge.

Christ was the Word made flesh. It was essential in the purpose of God that he be absolutely perfect and true in character, word, and action. This is strong supporting evidence that the Bible—the *recorded* Word, that Word which Christ came to perfectly manifest and fulfill—is also absolutely perfect and true. For it to be anything less would surely be unfitting in the light of the required perfection of Christ, the *living* Word, who was its fulfillment.

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The Bible demands man's complete submission and obedience to God as the only possible doorway to God's love and mercy and salvation. We shall never be able to obey perfectly, but this is no excuse but rather all the more reason to continually strain every effort to obey.

In the beginning, God placed man under a strict, specific law. It was not a general principle of morality or goodness that man could in any way figure out for himself as right. It was a completely arbitrary regulation to test his obedience and faithfulness: "You may eat this: you may not eat that." And upon simple obedience depended life and death. In the very last chapter of the Bible we have exactly the same story—

*"Blessed are they that **do His commandments**, that they may have right to the Tree of Life" (Rev. 22:14).*

The only way of access to the Tree of Life is to keep studying out what God has commanded, and making constant effort to obey. His commands are many, specific, and sometimes arbitrary—that is, in the sense that they must be specifically learned. For instance, Adam's "love" or "good intentions" could never have told him what trees he could eat of, and which not. It had to be *direct instruction* from God, carefully listened to and remembered.

Adam and Eve doubtless 'meant well,' but they allowed themselves to be persuaded that God did not really mean *exactly* what He said. They thought they could safely use their own good judgment. They did not realize that life and death depended on very careful and specific, word-for-word obedience. It is a great and primary lesson. The one thing God demands above all else is that we believe Him implicitly with complete childlike faith, and that we are very careful to—to the best of our ability—do *exactly* what He commands.

Without the specific, detailed instruction of the Bible, natural ignorant man cannot possibly tell what is 'right' or 'wrong,' 'good' or 'evil'—

*"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer.10:23).*

*"He that trusteth his own heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26).*

*"That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Lk. 16:12).*

*"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 16:25).*

In his memorable outline of his teaching given on the Mount (Mt. 5 to 7), Jesus gives many *specific commands*—commands that are directly contrary to the natural mind, and which would never appeal naturally to anyone's 'good intentions': *Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; lay not up treasure on earth; resist not evil; take no oaths; take any loss rather than sue at law, etc.*

And then he says at the end (Mt. 7:26) that whoever does not obey *all* these commands is building his house on sand, and the coming storm of judgment will destroy it.

Only a clear recognition of the infallible divinity of the Bible can lead a man to obey these flesh-crucifying commands, regardless of consequences and contrary to all dictates of fleshly wisdom. A partially-inspired, half-right, half-wrong, hit-and-miss Bible has no transforming power.

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Salvation will not come from just a few tired minutes of mechanical, absent-minded reading of the Bible each day, but by an intense, earnest, overpowering, constant yearning to know more of God and His Word; to do more in service to Him; to love Him more deeply and to conform more closely to His will. This must be the reigning passion of our lives. If it isn't, we are not of the few wise that God will select from the perishing billions to live eternally with Him.

It is so fatally easy to delude ourselves into assuming we of ourselves are something special in God's sight, arbitrarily chosen from the perishing billions, and that He will somehow overlook our disobedience and neglect and waste of time, just

because we're us.

We see others giving their whole lives with the intensity of fanaticism to what they mistakenly think is the Truth of God, and we pity their alien blindness with a sense of our own superior enlightenment, and we feel so snug and secure in our ivory tower of special divine choice.

But there is no excuse for this dreamy delusion. Time and time again we are told that God is no respecter of persons, and if we wish His approval we *must* diligently study and learn all His commands, and obey them to the limit of our ability: that there is *no* salvation *any* other way—

*"He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (1 Jn. 2:4).*

*"Ye are my friends, IF ye DO whatsoever I command you" (Jn. 15:14).*

*"Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom, but he that DOETH the will of my Father" (Mt.7:21).*

*"Whosoever DOETH the will of my Father, the same is my brother and sister and mother" (Mt. 12:50).*

*"Jesus Christ, Author of salvation to all them that OBEY him" (Heb. 5:9).*

*"If ye (baptized believers) live after the flesh, YE SHALL DIE" (Rm.8:13).*

Repeatedly the Word of God is likened to essential food and drink. Daily partaking and digesting and assimilating are vital to health and growth and very life itself.

Jesus said, not only "Come *unto* me;" but also (Jn.15:4-6)—

*"Abide in me...If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth and burned."*

And in the same context (v.10) he tells us *how* we abide in him—

*"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love."*

Do we keep them? Do we *know* them? There is no other way to life.

—G.V.Growcott