

The authority of the Bible

All car owners should have a manual that comes with the car. The manual is written by the manufacturer and tells the owner how to take care of the car properly. If someone else wrote the manual and wrote the wrong things it would damage the car. It's essential to have the correct manual in order to take care of the car without damaging it. So, it is essential to follow the authorised Word of God – the Bible – to adhere to God's way of life for us. We can't just follow any book.

2 Timothy 3: 16 – 17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

1) All Scripture is the Word of God

- We often hear people say that the Bible isn't the Word of God but contains the word of God.
- This verse doesn't say "some scripture" but "all scripture" is God-breathed. That means that all scripture is the Word of God, not some of it.
 - We cannot use logic to decide what is authoritative or not. Often the Word of God defies logic, such as a sea opening up for the Israelites to walk through on dry ground.
 - We can't pick and choose what is authoritative or not. Our natural bias to like some things and dislike others would make it very subjective.
 - We can't use our feelings to decide what is authoritative or not. Our feelings are fickle and change from one moment to the next.
- All scripture is God-breathed – God is the origin of all scripture.
 - This means that God intended to say something to us through everything that is written.
 - God speaks to us through history, the prophets, his dealings with his people.
 - God inspired the writing of the words of Satan in books like Job, or the demons speaking the demonic in the region of the Gerasenes. Obviously, God didn't speak those words but he inspired them to be written so that we can understand the wiles of the devil and his demons.
 - He inspired the writing of the wickedness of man to reveal the true condition of man, even the shortfalls of righteous men like Abraham, David, and the apostles.
- Jesus upheld the authority of Scripture by saying "it is written" when tempted by the devil in the wilderness.
 - He cited Deuteronomy 6: 4 - 5 as the greatest and second greatest commandments: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.
 - In the synagogue he read Isaiah 61: 1 – 2 and stated that it was fulfilled in their midst, referring to himself.
 - Isaiah 61: 1 – 2 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.
- Jesus is the central figure of all scripture through whom God speaks today.
 - Hebrews 1: 1 – 3 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.
- Peter refers to the letters of Paul as scripture
 - 2 Peter 3: 15 – 16 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

2) All Scripture was written by men under God's inspiration

- The question is if the Bible is the Word of God then why was it written by men.
- God inspired righteous men to write the scriptures using their own personalities and writing styles.
 - He guided their thinking to write what he wanted to say to the world.
- Moses wrote the Pentateuch – the first five books of the Bible. There are times when God clearly instructed him to write down the law:
 - Exodus 34: 27 – 28 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments.
- Most of the Psalms were written by David when he wrote down his emotional experiences and calling out to God through them.
- Solomon wrote the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs expressing his wisdom, his insight into life and marriage.
- The various prophets wrote their own books under instruction from God or they wrote down the specific messages from God for the people.
- The Gospels were written by Matthew and John, who were apostles of Jesus, Mark, who wasn't a disciple but spent time around Jesus and the apostles and was an eye witness of Jesus and his ministry, and Luke, who was a doctor and researched the life and ministry of Jesus.
 - Luke 1: 1 – 4 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.
- The letters were written by some of the apostles.
- Revelation was written by John, the apostle.

3) All Scripture is perpetually relevant

- Is the Bible still relevant today?
- The Word of God cannot be divorced from God himself and so is as relevant today as it was at the beginning of time when God spoke the first words to bring the universe into existence.
 - Genesis 1: 3 And God said, “Let there be light, and there was light.”
- Jesus upheld the ongoing relevance of scripture:
 - Matthew 5: 17 – 19 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.
- The eternal relevance of the Word of God for us
 - 1 Peter 1: 23 – 25 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.”
And this is the word that was preached to you.
- If the Bible is no longer relevant and the authority of our lives then we remain lost in our sins, which have not been forgiven and we are left without hope in this world and for eternity.
- The good news is that the Bible is still the authority of our lives and relevant giving us hope in this world and that to come.
- It remains the anchor and assurance on which we stand when the storms of life hit us.
- It remains our guide to do what is right and pleasing in the sight of God.
- It remains true, whether we believe it or not!