



CHAPTER 4

The Bible

KEY IDEA

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

KEY VERSE

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.
— 2 Timothy 3:16-17

BEGIN BY RECITING THE KEY VERSE AND THE KEY IDEA TOGETHER AS A GROUP.

LESSON

INTRODUCTION:

How do we know God? How do we understand and see the world we live in? How do we grasp where we came from and why we are here? How do we know where this story is ultimately heading?

Without the Bible, could the answers to these questions even be answered?

God reveals himself and his grand plan to us. Our role is to listen and believe. By simply looking at nature and the world around us we can conclude there is a God. But how do we learn about this God?

KEY QUESTION: "How can I know God and his will for my life?"

This question brings us to our Bible.

> Knowing with confidence this book is the Word of God that contains God's truth and will for our lives, and knowing how to read and understand it for ourselves, is basic to the Christian.

The Bible fills us in on such important life matters as:

- who the one true God is
- God's love for us
- our birth into sin and separation from God
- Jesus' payment for our sin to restore us
- the best way to live a successful and productive life
- the truth about the future and God's ultimate redemption of man

The Bible not only claims to give answers to these questions but also invites us to believe and embrace so much more.

SOME BIBLE HISTORY:

The Bible was written over a span of 1500 years, by 40 authors.

> Unlike other religious writings, the Bible reads as a factual news account of real events, places, people, and dialogue.

< Historians and archaeologists have repeatedly confirmed its authenticity.

> There is one central message consistently carried by all 40 authors of the Bible:

< God, who created us all, desires a relationship with us.

< He calls us to know him and trust him.

The Bible not only inspires us, it explains life and God to us.

> It does not answer *all* the questions we might have, but enough of them.

> It shows us

< How to live with purpose and compassion.

< How to relate to others.

> It encourages us to rely on God for strength, direction, and enjoy his love for us.

> The Bible also tells us how we can have eternal life.

Do you trust the Bible to give you inspiration, purpose, compassion, direction, etc.?

Does archaeology support the Bible?

Archaeology cannot prove that the Bible is God's written word to us. However, archaeology can (and does) substantiate the Bible's historical accuracy.

> Archaeologists have consistently discovered the names of government officials, kings, cities, and festivals mentioned in the Bible -- sometimes even when historians didn't think such people or places existed.

For example, the Gospel of John tells of Jesus healing a cripple next to the Pool of Bethesda. The text even describes the five porticoes (walkways) leading to the pool. Scholars didn't think the pool existed, until archaeologists found it forty feet below ground, complete with the five porticoes.

> The Bible has a tremendous amount of historical detail, so not everything mentioned in it has yet been found through archaeology.

< However, not one archaeological find has conflicted with what the Bible records.

> Many of the ancient locations mentioned by Luke, in the Book of Acts in the New Testament, have been identified through archaeology.

< Luke names thirty-two countries, fifty-four cities and nine islands without an error.

> Archaeology has also refuted many incorrect theories about the Bible.

For example, a theory asserts that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch, because writing had not been invented in his day. Then archaeologists discovered the Black Stele. It had wedge-shaped characters on it and contained the detailed laws of Hammurabi. It was pre-Mosaic; and even pre-Abraham (2,000 B.C.). It preceded Moses' writings by at least three centuries.

> Archaeology consistently confirms the historical accuracy of the Bible.

Has the Bible changed over time, or do we have what was originally written?

Some people have the idea that the Bible has been translated "so many times" that it has become corrupted through the various stages of translating.

> If the translations were being made from other translations, they would have a case. But translations are actually made directly from original Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic source texts based on thousands of ancient manuscripts.

> The Old Testament's accuracy was confirmed by an archaeological discovery in 1947, along today's West Bank in Israel when several jars with scrolls inside them were found.

< "The Dead Sea Scrolls" contained Old Testament scripture dating 1,000 years older than any manuscripts that were available at that time.

^ When comparing manuscripts with these, from 1,000 years earlier, 99.5% agreement was found.

^ The .5% differences are minor spelling variances and sentence structure that doesn't change the meaning of the sentence.

> Regarding the New Testament, we find it is the most reliable ancient document.

< There are thousands of copies of the New Testament, all dated closely to the original writing.

< In fact, we are more sure the New Testament remains as it was originally written by its authors, than we are sure of writings we attribute to Plato, or Aristotle, or Homer's *Iliad*.

Are the gospel accounts of Jesus reliable?

Four of the authors of the New Testament each wrote their own biography on the life of Jesus. These are called the four gospels, the first four books of the New Testament. How can we be sure these biographies of Jesus are accurate?

> When historians try to determine if a biography is reliable, they ask, "How many other sources report the same details about this person?"

Here's how this works. Imagine you are collecting biographies of President John F. Kennedy. You find many describing his family, his presidency, his handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and almost all of the biographies report similar facts. But what if you found one biography reporting that he lived ten years as a priest in South Africa? The other biographies show he lived in the U.S. his entire life. A sensible historian would go with the accounts that agree with one another.

> Regarding Jesus, we find multiple biographies reporting similar facts about his life.

[Below is a chart regarding these similarities.]

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus was born of a virgin	1:18-25	-	1:27, 34	-
He was born in Bethlehem	2:1	-	2:4	-
He lived in Nazareth	2:23	1:9, 24	2:51, 4:16	1:45, 46
Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist	3:1-15	1:4-9	3:1-22	-
He performed miracles of healing	4:24, etc.	1:34, etc.	4:40, etc.	9:7

He walked on water	14:25	6:48	-	6:19
He fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fish	14:7	6:38	9:13	6:9
Jesus taught the common people	5:1	4:25, 7:28	9:11	18:20
He spent time with social outcasts	9:10, 21:31	2:15, 16	5:29, 7:29	8:3
He argued with the religious elite	15:7	7:6	12:56	8:1-58
The religious elite plotted to kill him	12:14	3:6	19:47	11:45-57
They handed Jesus over to the Romans	27:1, 2	15:1	23:1	18:28
Jesus was flogged	27:26	15:15	-	19:1
He was crucified	27:26-50	15:22-37	23:33-46	19:16-30
He was buried in a tomb	27:57-61	15:43-47	23:50-55	19:38-42
Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to his followers	28:1-20	16:1-20	24:1-53	20:1-31

< Two of the gospel biographies were written by the apostles Matthew and John, men who knew Jesus personally and traveled with him for over three years.

< The other two books were written by Mark and Luke, close associates of the apostles.

> The gospel writers had direct access to the facts they were recording.

> The early church accepted the four gospels because they agreed with what was already common knowledge about Jesus' life.

> The descriptions are unique to each author, but the facts are in agreement. The gospels give specific geographical names and cultural details that have been confirmed by historians and archaeologists.

Does history confirm what the Bible says about Jesus?

The Bible reports that Jesus of Nazareth performed many miracles, was executed by the Romans, and rose from the dead.

> Numerous ancient historians corroborate the Bible's account of the life of Jesus and his followers:

< *Cornelius Tacitus* (A.D. 55-120), an historian of first-century Rome, is considered one of the most accurate historians of the ancient world. An excerpt from Tacitus tells us that the Roman emperor Nero "inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class...called Christians. ...Christus [Christ], from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus...."

< *Flavius Josephus*, a Jewish historian (A.D. 38-100), wrote about Jesus in his *Jewish Antiquities*. From Josephus, we learn that Jesus was a wise man who did surprising feats, taught many, won over followers from among Jews and Greeks, was believed to be the Messiah, was accused by the Jewish leaders, was condemned to be crucified by Pilate, and was considered to be resurrected.

< *Suetonius*, *Pliny the Younger*, and *Thallus* also wrote about Christian worship and persecution that is consistent with New Testament accounts.

< Even the Jewish *Talmud*, certainly not biased toward Jesus, concurs about the major events of his life. From the *Talmud*, we learn that Jesus was conceived out of wedlock, gathered disciples, made

blasphemous claims about himself, and worked miracles, but these miracles are attributed to sorcery and not to God.

> This information is impressive in that most ancient historians focused on political and military leaders, not on obscure rabbis from distant provinces of the Roman Empire.

< Yet ancient historians (Jews, Greeks and Romans) confirm the major events that are presented in the New Testament, even though they were not believers themselves.

Are there contradictions in the Bible?

While some claim that the Bible is full of contradictions, this isn't true. The number of apparent contradictions is actually remarkably small for a book of the Bible's size and scope.

> The apparent discrepancies that do exist are more curiosity than contradictory crises.

< They do not touch on any major event or article of faith.

> Here is an example of a so-called contradiction.

Pilate ordered that a sign be posted on the cross where Jesus hung. Three of the Gospels record what was written on that sign: In Matthew: "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews." In Mark: "The king of the Jews." In John: "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews." The wording is different, hence the apparent contradiction.

< A remarkable thing is that all three writers describe the same event in such detail

^ They all agree that Jesus was crucified.

^ They all record that a sign was posted on the cross, and the meaning of the sign is the same in all three accounts!

< What about the exact wording?

^ In the original Greek of the Gospels, they didn't use a quotation symbol as we do today to indicate a direct quote.

^ The Gospel authors were making an indirect quote, which would account for the subtle differences in the passages.

> Here is another example of an apparent contradiction.

Was Jesus two nights in the tomb or three nights in the tomb before His resurrection? Jesus said, prior to his crucifixion, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40). Mark records another statement that Jesus made, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise." (Mark 10:33,34)

< Jesus was killed on Friday and the resurrection was discovered on Sunday. How can that be three days and nights in the tomb?

^ It was a Jewish figure of speech in Jesus' time to count any part of a day or night as a full day and night. So Friday, Saturday, and Sunday would be called three days and three nights in Jesus' culture.

> This is typical of apparent contradictions in the New Testament. Most are resolved by a closer examination of the text itself or through studying the historical background.

Another theory to the "three nights in the tomb" is addressed in R.A. Torrey's little book, *Difficulties in the Bible: Alleged Errors and Contradictions*. You should be able to find a pdf copy of it on line. This

topic is addressed in section 21, “Was Jesus Really Three Days and Three Nights in the Heart of the Earth?”

How were the books of the New Testament determined?

There are solid reasons for trusting in today's list of New Testament books.

- > The church accepted the New Testament books almost as soon as they were written.
 - < Their authors were friends of Jesus or his immediate followers, men to whom Jesus had entrusted the leadership of the early church.
 - < The Gospel writers Matthew and John were some of Jesus' closest followers. Mark and Luke were companions of the apostles, having access to the apostles' account of Jesus' life.
- > The other New Testament authors had immediate access to Jesus as well.
 - < James and Jude were half-brothers of Jesus who initially did not believe in him.
 - < Peter was one of the 12 apostles.
 - < Paul started out as a violent opponent of Christianity and a member of the religious ruling class, but he became a follower of Jesus, convinced that Jesus rose from the dead.
- > The reports in the New Testament books lined up with what thousands of eyewitnesses had seen for themselves.

When other books were written hundreds of years later, it wasn't difficult for the church to spot them as forgeries.

- > The Gospel of Judas was written by the Gnostic sect, around 130-170 A.D., long after Judas' death.
- > The Gospel of Thomas, written around 140 A.D., is another example of a writing erroneously bearing an apostles' name.
- > These and other Gnostic gospels conflicted with the known teachings of Jesus and the Old Testament, and often contained numerous historical and geographical errors.

In A.D. 367, Athanasius formally listed the 27 New Testament books (the same list that we have today).

- > For the most part the church recognized and used this same list of books since the first century after Christ.
- > As the church grew beyond the Greek-speaking lands and needed to translate the Scriptures, and as splinter sects continued to pop up with their own competing holy books, it became more important to have a definitive list.

Why did it take 30 to 60 years for the New Testament Gospels to be written?

The main reason the Gospel accounts were not written immediately after Jesus' death and resurrection is that there was no apparent need for any such writings.

- > Initially the gospel spread by word of mouth in Jerusalem.
 - < There was no need to compose a written account of Jesus' life, because those in the Jerusalem region were witnesses of Jesus and well aware of his ministry.
- > However, when the gospel spread beyond Jerusalem, and the eyewitnesses were no longer readily accessible, there was a need for written accounts to educate others about Jesus' life and ministry.
- > Many scholars date the writing of the Gospels between 30 and 60 years after Jesus' death.
 - < *Luke, at the beginning of his gospel, tells us why he wrote it: "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. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may have certainty of the things you have been taught."

So, when it comes to the scriptures of the Bible we find:

- > historians concur
- > archaeology concurs
- > the four Gospel biographies are in agreement
- > the preservation of document copies is remarkable
- > there is superior accuracy in the translations.

All of this gives a solid foundation for believing that what we read today is what the original authors wrote and experienced in real life, in real places.

GOD SPEAKS

The Bible repeatedly records that God communicated to his people at specific times with specific messages. In some cases, such as with Moses at the burning bush, he spoke audibly. In other instances he spoke through dreams or visions or less direct impressions. But the words of the Lord were always given to his people to reveal his plan for them and for all humanity. God revealed his story because he loves us.

Exodus 3:4-6

God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."

"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob."

The Lord spoke mostly through prophets in the Old Testament and through Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament. After Jesus' death and resurrection, two of his followers were walking on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Jesus came up and started walking and talking with them. The stories he tells from the Old Testament books he calls Scripture means Jesus understood these writings as inspired by God.

Luke 24:27

Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

KEY IDEA: I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God that guides my beliefs and actions.

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

We would only want to give the Bible the right to guide our lives if we truly believed it was from God. There are three big concepts we need to understand, so we can decide for ourselves whether we think this book is from him.

Taken from *THINK, ACT, BELIEVE LIKE JESUS* by Randy Frazee

THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED — BREATHED OUT BY GOD HIMSELF.

- > The Bible makes this claim: “All Scripture is God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16).
 - < The Greek word used for “God-breathed” is the same word used to translate the original Hebrew word into Greek in Genesis 2:7, where God *breathed* life into Adam’s nostrils.
 - ^ The writer of Hebrews confirms the claim: “The word of God is alive and active.”
 - ^ God himself inspired this book. It is alive — a living organism.

The Bible came to us over a long time through the guidance of God in four phases.

PHASE 1: Revelation -- This refers to God’s ongoing decision to reveal himself to us.

- > Romans tells us God reveals himself to all people *externally through nature*.
 - < This is called GENERAL REVELATION. *“Since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” Romans 1:20*
- > God also reveals himself to everyone *internally through our consciences*:
 - When Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them. Romans 2:14-15*
 - < The INTERNAL SENSE/REVELATION of right and wrong and even the very existence of God himself are written into the code of our conscience.
- > God also reveals himself *through a specific person at a specific time with a specific message* to communicate from himself.
 - < Examples of SPECIAL REVELATION are dreams and visitations of angels, as we see in the lives of Mary and Joseph, who were both given these direct messages from God.
 - < Through this mode of revelation, God spoke to the authors who penned the books of the Bible, which leads us to Phase 2.

PHASE 2: Inspiration

God revealed his message to chosen people to be written down.

- > In the Old Testament, it was predominantly the prophets
- > In the New Testament, it was the apostles.
- > It took forty authors over fourteen hundred years to write down the sixty-six books we call the Bible.
 - Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20-21*

PHASE 3: Transmission

Transmission refers to the task in which the individual books were copied down. These were done so meticulously as to be equal to classic works of art.

- > Biblical transcribers applied intense scrutiny to make certain authenticity was being maintained.
 - < This was done to the point that one page often took several months to complete.
 - For example, in order to check for accuracy, when a page was completed, the middle word on a page was identified, and positioning was checked against the original. If a word did not match up to the exact spot of the standard, the copy was burned and the work started again.*
- > Today, we do not have any of the original scrolls, but we do have thousands of those copies.

< If you compare the copies we have of the New Testament with its closest book of antiquity — Homer’s *Iliad* — 643 copies of the *Iliad* exist today, while 24,000 known copies of the New Testament exist.

< The oldest known copy of the *Iliad* is 500 years older than the original, while the oldest copy of the New Testament is less than 100 years older than the original.

< In the New Testament, only 400 words carry any question as to their original penning, none of which relate to actual doctrine.

> This is a 99.9% accuracy rate.

< Benjamin B. Warfield, a Bible scholar, had this to say after years of studying the development of the New Testament:

If we compare the present state of the New Testament with that of any other ancient writing, we must . . . declare it to be marvelously correct. Such has been the care with which the New Testament has been copied — a care which has doubtless grown out of true reverence for its holy words — such has been the providence of God in preserving for his Church in each and every age a competently exact text of the Scripture, that not only is the New Testament unrivalled among ancient writings in the purity of its text as actually transmitted and kept in use, but also in the abundance of testimony which has come down to us for castigating its comparatively infrequent blemishes.

It is clear from these historical facts that God himself oversaw the handling and care of his Word in a meticulous manner.

> Factoring in the many attempts to disprove the Bible, we should feel confident in its inspiration.

> After much testing, time, energy, and divine guidance, in AD 400, nearly 370 years after Christ’s death, the sixty-six books as we know them today officially came together for the first time under one cover.

PHASE 4: Translation

Translation refers to the process by which the Bible was translated from the original Hebrew and Greek copies into other languages.

> Today we have a variety of translations and paraphrases of the Bible, with even more in process.

Many ministries are working with people groups all over the world to bring the Bible to the estimated 180 million who do not have Scripture in their own language. To date, only 513 of the more than 7,000 languages in the world have complete Bibles in that native tongue. —Wycliffe Bible Translators

After investigating the origins and process throughout history of how the Bible came to us, millions of people have come to believe it is the very Word of God.

After reading all the above information regarding the Bible, how confident do you feel in its authority?

THE PURPOSE OF SCRIPTURE

Because the collection of sacred writings, or Scriptures, came from God, it is referred to as the Word of God. God’s Word is eternal and always accomplishes its purposes.

THE BIBLE IS AUTHORITATIVE — POSSESSING THE RIGHT TO DIRECT OUR LIVES

As the Word of God, the Bible has the right to govern a Christian’s life.

> Therefore, we are not to pick and choose what we read and obey. Rather we are to take the entire book as a total work and accept it in its entirety.

> Psalm 119 is the longest Psalm (and chapter) in the Bible. It is about God’s word. Verses 1-4 read:

Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart — they do no wrong but follow his ways. You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed.

THE BIBLE IS INFALLIBLE — UNFAILING IN ACCOMPLISHING ITS PURPOSES

The Isaiah 55:10-11 states:

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

What God’s Word says will come about, *will* come about. What God’s Word says it will do in our life, it *will* do in our life. - Randy Frazee

How often do you go to the Bible to seek out the will of God for your life?

When seeking Biblical guidance, how do you approach the Word of God? Do you seek random verses? Do you get out study Bibles and Commentaries?

What do you think is the best way to find guidance from the Bible?

Is it possible to misuse the Scriptures in making decisions?



FROM THINK, ACT, BELIEVE LIKE JESUS by Randy Frazee

KEY APPLICATION: What difference does this make in the way I live?

If someone actually believed this about the Bible from their heart, how would they live differently?

- **The Bible is the lens from which we view the world.** Every one of us sees the world and each day unfold through a set of lenses. When we look over our shoulder, these spectacles form an image in our mind of the past. As we squint to see as far as the eye can see, these lenses will give us a vision of the future. God’s Word informs what we think and feel about everything we encounter. We see the intervention of God in history, in our present lives, and on into the future as he continues to write his grand story.
- **We are obligated and motivated to study the Bible to understand God’s will for our lives.** The apostle Paul wrote, *“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.”* (Romans 12:2) The Bible forms the content of truth we seek to marinate our minds in. We seek to do as the psalmist suggests: *“I meditate on it all day long.”* (Psalm 119:97)

- **The principles in the Bible must govern our lives, even when we don’t fully understand or like what it teaches.** In the book of Proverbs, we find this wise command: *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own make your paths straight.”* (Prov. 3:4-5)

Renowned theologian Søren Kierkegaard challenges our false front: “The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly.”

The writer of Hebrews (4:12) tells us the Bible is *“sharper than any double-edged sword”* and *“penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”* Put another way, its words have a way of getting under our skin.

The Bible is not a book of suggestions, but rather claims to be the very Word of God and invites you to let it rule and guide every aspect of your life. So, are you in or out?

Do you believe the Bible is the Word of God and that it has the right to command your belief and action?

Whether you answered this question “yes” or “no”, write down why? _____



A LITTLE SOMETHING EXTRA

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

The Bible makes a claim that most books do not. It claims to be from God. Unlike the few that make the claim, the Bible’s claim is true. This is the concept called “inspiration.”

*Inspiration establishes that the Bible is a divine product. In other words, Scripture is divinely inspired in that God actively worked through the process and had his hand in the outcome of what Scripture would say. Inspired Scripture is simply written revelation. "Scripture is not only man's word, but also, and equally God's word, spoken through man's lips or written with man's pen" (J.I. Packer, *The Origin of the Bible*, p. 31).*



While there are different views as to the extent to which the Bible is inspired, there can be no doubt that the Bible itself claims that every word in every part of the Bible comes from God (1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). This view of the Scriptures is often referred to as "verbal plenary" inspiration. That means the inspiration extends to the very words themselves (verbal)—not just concepts or ideas—and that the inspiration extends to all parts of Scripture and all subject matters of Scripture (plenary). Some people believe only parts of the Bible are inspired or only the thoughts or concepts that deal with religion are inspired, but these views of inspiration fall short of the Bible's claims about itself. Full verbal plenary inspiration is an essential characteristic of the Word of God.

The extent of inspiration can be clearly seen in 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." This verse tells us that God inspired all Scripture and that it is profitable to us. It is not just the parts of the Bible that deal with religious doctrines that are inspired, but each and every word from Genesis to Revelation. Because it is inspired by God, the Scriptures are therefore authoritative when it comes to establishing doctrine, and sufficient for teaching man how to be in a right relationship with God. The Bible claims not only to be inspired by God, but also to have the supernatural ability to change us and make us "complete." What more can we need? (from GOCQUESTIONS.COM)