

Manuscript Evidence

Grace school of the Bible

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MSS 101 - 1

This course is called Manuscript Evidence. This is going to be an in-depth study into the origin and the transmission of the written word of God. In other words, where did it come from? What is its origin? And, how did it get from the original autograph, when it was originally written, into our hands today?

I want you to be able to accurately and confidently identify and defend the word of God. I want you to be able to know where it is and what it is. You need to know where it came from. We are going to study these things in a great deal of detail.

Now, you need to remember those things about the course. We are going to study the origin and the transmission of the scripture so that you can identify the text, (what the bible is), and then be able to defend it.

Turn to Genesis 3. I want to start, in this lesson, by showing you a tremendously important issue. It is so important that we are going to study it first before we study anything else. You are going to see that this is *the* issue above everything else. If you cannot get this issue straight, there will not be anything else that you will ever get straight.

Genesis 3:1-6 – “NOW the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”

Now, the original standards of the original Textual Critic are preserved for you by God, and you can see the tactics, and the methods, and the approach, and the policy of evil that Satan has against God's word.

Now, you need to get an understanding of this. How does Satan come at God's word? Before Eve ever took of that tree, there is a long discussion (5 verses) between her and Satan. In that whole discussion, the tactics and the policy of Satan's design against the word of God are laid out for you. And, it is just as true today as it was then. In fact, today, we are in the advanced stages of that campaign.

In Genesis 3:1, the very first thing that Satan does is question the word of God. He questions the scripture. "NOW the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said ...?" (Did God really say that? Are you sure God said that?) He raises the question; he raises the doubt. Notice that he does it with a positive approach. You want to remember that. He says, "Yea, (yes), hath God said ..."

Folks, the root source of all questioning and doubt of the bible comes from the Adversary.

He begins to question the word. He begins to raise doubt about it.

Genesis 3:2,3 – "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Now, verse 2 says, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden." Is that what God told them?

Go back to Genesis 2:16 and notice what Eve does. God is talking to Adam – "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." What is the command? It says, "Of every tree you may freely eat".

In Genesis 3:2, Eve says, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden." Do you see what Eve did there? She left a very important word out. She subtracted a word from the text. She subtracted the word "freely" from the text. The first mistake Eve made, outside of engaging the Adversary in a conversation, was subtracting from the text.

So, there is *questioning the word of God*, and then there is *subtracting from the word of God*.

Eve left that word "freely" out. Do you remember another verse where that word is important? Romans 3:24 – "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." You want to be careful about that word "freely". Romans 8:32 – "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" That is an important word.

Number one is *question the word*. Number two is *subtract from the word* – leave out some things, take away from the text.

Now, look at Genesis 3:3 – "But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

Now look back at Genesis 2:16,17 and show me where, in those verses, God told them that they could not touch the fruit of the tree. You cannot tell me, can you? So what did they do?

Number one – *they question it*. Number two – *they subtract from the text*. Number three – *they are adding words* to the text that does not belong there.

Now, that is what's called the Dynamic Equivalency Method of translating. That method says that he had the idea that we should not touch it.

But, you want a literal, word-for-word equivalency, and you do not have it there. They have taken liberty - subtracting and adding to the text.

Genesis 3:3 – "... Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Now that is *watering the thing down*.

Look back at Genesis 2:17 at the last four words. Does it say, "thou shalt possibly die?" Is that what it says? No, it says, "thou shalt surely die."

But in Genesis 3:3, the "thou shalt surely die" becomes "well, you might die." And that is watering the severity of the thing down.

We are talking about the tactics of the original criticism and the Textural Critic's approach to the scripture. And this is a classic passage. *They question the word of God, they subtract from the words of God, they add to the words of God, and they water down the words of God*. And after they questioned it, added to it, subtracted from it, and watered it down, then Satan comes in (verse 4) and says, "Ye shall not surely die." He just flat out *denies it*.

Notice what he denies. He did not deny the words "*you shall not possibly die*". He denied the original version. He denied "Ye shall not surely die." That word "surely" is the word used in Genesis 2:17.

If you go on and read in Genesis 3:5, it says, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The basis of Satan's denial of the word of God is a desire that he perceives in Eve for an independent viewpoint –for her own viewpoint, for her own knowledge.

Folks, as you get around, you will find that people use knowledge and education in regard to human viewpoint. (Now, you understand that I am not opposed to education. Look what you are doing now. But, I am talking about human viewpoint.) They use that to justify the denial of the word of God. And denying the word of God never comes except first there is *questioning the word of God, adding to it, and subtracting from it*, which results in *watering it down*, which results in losing it.

Sin, on this planet earth, begins with an attack on God's word in Genesis 3. There is a satanic policy of evil against the word of God clearly laid out in the scripture, and the design is simply to destroy the final authority of your bible. Satan wants to take that word of God and make it less than the final authority.

Now, how is he going to do that? Well, if you have an authority and it speaks with authority, the tactic is to bring up another authority along side of it and give that second authority equal weight with the first.

Well, then how do you decide which is right? If you have two competing authorities, who decides what is right? A third authority decides – you do, or somebody does.

For example: you have two baseball teams playing against each other. There is a close play at first base. Well, you know what they are all going to say, right? The guy in the field is going to say that he was out, and the guy running is going to say that he is safe. Now, what do you have in the game to take care of that? You have a final authority; you have an umpire. If that umpire says that someone is out, you can kick dirt on him all day long, but it does not change anything unless you can go convince the league commissioner that he was wrong. But, when that happens, nobody ever knows if they can be sure or not.

So, Satan's attempt is to get rid of that final authority by putting up a competing authority. And the policy, and the design, is to destroy that final authority in God's word.

In politics, that is called dialectic. A guy by the name of Hegel developed, in philosophy, a thing that is called Hegel's Dialectic. That means you have a thesis and that is your postulate – the thing you say. Every thesis automatically develops an anti-thesis – the opposite viewpoint. And neither one of those two competing viewpoints is an absolute truth, therefore, the result is always a synthesis of the two. It is a synthesis – it results in a third viewpoint.

The problem with this is that as soon as the synthesis comes up, there is a new thesis, which develops a new anti-thesis, which has to go through the process again. And he says, of course, that that's the way human history is going upward into the stars and clouds soon to be in the third heaven to be like God.

Well, the Communists take that system, and they call it the Dialectic Materialism. Communism as an economic system; its name is Dialectic Materialism. They take Hegel's dialectic, the philosophical viewpoint of history, and they apply it to economics, and come up with communism.

This is certainly true in the context of human viewpoint, but the problem with that is that when God gave that book, he gave it to be an anchor. No matter what your thesis is, if the old book stands up here and the old book is different from human viewpoint, that is the final authority. And it will look at your thesis and say that it is wrong. It may look at that guy's opinion, and say that it is right. It stands. It is the authority.

But, Satan wants to get rid of that authority. He does not want you to have the capacity, in your hands, to have what God Almighty says. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 2:17 – “For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God.” The way you corrupt the word of God is by *questioning it, or changing it by subtracting from it or adding to it,*

or watering down. We are not like that “but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.”

Now, I want you to look at a passage in Amos. Folks, we are at the advanced stages today in the religious system. Satan has a policy of evil against the word of God, an attack against the word of God. His policy questions the word of God, and waters down the authority of the word of God.

When you men get out into the ministry, you will be out in a world, and a situation, (in our country anyway), where the word of God is largely a fleeting ghost, only in the imagination and memory of some religious people. Most people in religious circles today do not believe that the bible is an absolute final authority.

Now, when we get around to studying advanced theology, (which means we will really be studying some of the heresies in theology), we will study things like neoorthodoxy, and Bultmannism, and those kinds of things. Those things are the natural deviations from the viewpoint that the bible is the word of God. When we come to it and when it speaks, that is God talking; and we believe it is an absolute thing. But, they begin to come to the point of view that it is an absolute, therefore, the only living reality is the person of Christ in your life and all of those kinds of things. And all of the sudden you do not have any concrete standard to judge by.

Now, that is why this stuff is important. You need to know where God’s word is because Satan is interested, and he has a positive program in place to corrupt that book.

I want you to see an illustration, in Amos 8, of the results of losing the final authority and losing the word of God. Amos is a prophet in Israel, and he is prophesying about the judgment of God on the nation. In the last verse of Amos 5, he tells them that they are going into captivity, and that God is going to take them away into the exile. In Amos 8:11, he says, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.”

Now, notice that it says “words”. That’s the words on the page, not just the message but the words. There is going to be a famine, an inability to find God’s word.

Amos 8:12 – “And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find *it*.” Now, if you study the book of Amos, you will find that this passage is prophetic, not just of the captivity of Israel; but it is also prophetic of the tribulation period.

In the tribulation period there will be two big issues. *Number one*, 2 Peter 3:4 – “Where is the promise of his coming?” When is he coming? Is he coming? *Number two*, the other question will be – Where is the word of God? Where’s the bible? What is the bible?

Do you know what you have today, folks?

I taught a bible class several years ago down in Alabama, and a fellow came into my class with a stack of books piled high on his arm. I never saw the guy before. He had ten books. I asked him if he was going to read all of them that night.

He said, "Yes".

And he got down on the floor and laid all those books out there. They were all bibles – different versions.

I said, "Tell me something. Which one of them do you believe?"

He said, "Oh, I believe all of them."

And I thought *Boy, we are going to have a good time tonight.*

Before the evening was over, I found out that he did not believe any of them. That's sad!

It never dawned on him before, but do you know why he did not believe any of them? He had so many of them, and they all conflicted among themselves. He did not have any idea whether one of them was an authority or not. If one said this and one said that, then who decided? Well, he had to decide. And he decided it on the basis of something somebody else told him about them. (Think that through for awhile.)

In this passage, God says, "You do not want the word, you do not want the revelation. Okay, I'm going to fix it so it will not be available to you."

Look what happens in Amos 8:13,14 – "In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again." They will be totally consumed by a religious system – no book, no light, no revelation. They will have their doctrinal statements – "Thy god, O Dan, liveth." They conform to the fundamentals of a creed. They are orthodox, but they do not have a book, and they do not have light; and God's judgment is on them. They are all swept off in judgment.

Now, I do not want you to be that way!

Let me tell you something gentlemen, and I mean this from the bottom of my heart. *If you do not have an absolute final authority, don't you preach to anybody.* If you cannot find out what God's word is, and know what it is, and have it in your hand, and know you are preaching it, then you hang up your track shoes and you go fishing, but don't you preach. If you preach, all you are going to do is what that verse in Amos says. You are just going to build a bunch a people into a religious system that God Almighty is going to judge and condemn.

The most hateful thing on the face of this earth to God Almighty is religion. God never gave but one religion in all human history, and he gave it to the nation Israel; and God has set that religion aside.

Religion is the binding of duties upon men, the teaching of commandments and doctrines of men, and God hates that. And, if you do not have a book, you do not have a final authority. So, all you have to preach is commandments and doctrines of men.

Now, the world is hungry today for authority. They are hungry for leadership; they are hungry for purity; they are hungry for an honest message that has some power in it. And there is not any power, anywhere, except in that book. You know that, and that's the reason you are here. But, I want you to understand that that's a fact. And that is why this issue is important.

Folks, if you want power to get a drunkard saved, or you want power to get a proud boastful spirit in line, or you want power to overcome the sins of life in your life and the lives of those you will minister to, that power must come out of a book; and that book is God's book. You will need some authority. And that is what the world is after, and that is what the religious system does not have.

Now, here is a verse you need to remember. Romans 10:17 – “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” In the final analysis, the word of God, (your bible), is the only ultimate proof that you have for your faith. The ultimate proof for your faith is in that book.

I will give you an illustration of what I mean. When I was in high school, I learned this lesson the hard way. I was dealing with a guy in my high school and trying to get him to trust Christ. I was witnessing to him. He was getting more and more edgy as time went on. One day we were sitting in homeroom waiting for class to start. He was sitting in front of me, and he turned around and looked at me, and he said, “Tell me something. You think you are always right and everybody else is always wrong. How come you know for sure and how come you can be so dogmatic and say that you are right and everybody else is wrong? Who in the world do you think you are to be so sure that what you believe is true?”

I just felt like crawling underneath the desk, because I did not really know. All I knew was that it was true.

Well, I got to thinking about that, and I found out something.

Now, what would you say to somebody that said that to you?

Well, I said to him, “I believe it's right, because I feel it's right. Christ lives in my heart.” I know it because I feel it!

Was that a good answer? No, it wasn't a good answer, and I knew it wasn't when I gave it; but it was all I had.

Do you know why that is not a good answer? If you meet a Buddhist, do you know how he knows he is right? He feels that he's right.

I met an old boy in Southern Alabama one time. I was witnessing to him and he said, “I'm a Bahai.”

I said, “What in the world is a Bahai?”

He said, “Haven't you heard about 'The Bob'?”

I said, "No, but tell me about this."

(I got some books out and looked up some cults. It is a screwy Persian religion. I read about it so I could witness to the guy effectively. I did a little homework.)

I said to him, "Tell me about your religion; tell me about your faith. How did you get into that religion."

He said, "Well, I was raised a Roman Catholic."

I said, "Well, how did you get into this stuff?"

He said, "I was in the Air Force out in Colorado Springs. I went out into the desert with some young people, and I had the most beautiful religious experience you could ever dream about. And, I am convinced that it is right."

Well don't you tell people that you know Christ lives because he lives in your heart if you are not willing to let old Wallace tell you that 'The Bob' lives in his heart, because he knows it the same way. He feels it!

You could not say, "I believe that Christianity is right because Christianity has more followers than any other religion in the world." You know that would not do, and that is not even true. Islam has more followers than any other religion in the world. And besides that, bible-believing Christians are in the distinct minority.

You could not say that you know that your faith is right because it is the oldest religion. Someone that believes in Confucius would say that Confucius came along many centuries before Christ was ever born.

I do not know what you would say if someone would ask you how you know you are right, but I will tell you this – the one unanswerable argument is your own personal copy of God's word. You just reach in your pocket, and hold up your bible, and confidently proclaim *Look at that! I am right because the author of my faith has given me a book, which is unlike any other book of any other religion*. Then you open it up, and you preach it to him.

You've heard the old saying, "You don't defend the lion. He could take care of himself if you let him out of the cage." Well, that's what you do with that book.

Folks, if you use that book right, it is enough to overwhelmingly convince any honest and sincere listener. And that is the answer.

Ultimately, you know you are right because of the bible. Do you see why it is important to be able to know what that book is and where it is? If Satan can take that book away from you, he has destroyed the basis of your ministry.

My friend, you listen to me. There are a lot of men that go off to Bible School, and they go off to Seminary, believing the bible. But, when they come out the other end, they do not believe anything! They do not believe there is a bible; they do not believe they have a bible; they do not even believe that it is possible to find a bible.

I do not want you to be that way! I want you to be able to know what it is, and this course is going to be a course to guide you in a search for the word of God – the infallible, true, living, final authority of the eternal God.

The word of God is the only absolute moral authority in the universe. You will hear me say that over and over again. That book, the word of God, is the only absolute moral authority in the universe.

Now, I am going to show you beyond any doubt that there is a final absolute authority, (a bible, a scripture), and that it is available to you to have in your hands, and to hold, and to study, and to read. It is available to you in the form of a King James Bible. I will tell you my prejudices up front. I did not start out believing that, but through the years, I have found that to be true. And I want you to be confident in your bible, and I want you to be able to handle it.

The bible is an amazing book, and I want you to learn some statistics about it so that you can familiarize yourself with the territory.

(But, you will need to remember those five things we went over, in Genesis 3, about the handling of the scripture. You need to remember that Satan's design is to destroy the final authority of the word. You need to be familiar with that passage in Amos 8 and understand what it is about. You need to memorize Roman 10:17. You need to know that the ultimate proof of your faith is the word of God. You will see those things on a test in the near future.)

Now, the word "bible" comes from "TeBiblia", and that means "the books". There are 66 books in your bible. There are 39 books in your Old Testament. There are 27 books in your New Testament.

A good way to remember that is that there are 39 books in the Old Testament, and what is 3 x 9? That makes it easy to remember that there are 27 books in the New Testament.

There are 1,189 chapters in the bible, and 31,101 verses in the bible, and 783,137 words in the bible, (if you want to count them sometime). You do not have to worry about the number of words in the bible, but it will pay you to know those other numbers.

The bible was written by 40+ authors over a period of 1500+ years.

The Old Testament is basically written in Hebrew. Ezra 4:8-6:18, 7:12-26; Jeremiah 10:11; and Daniel 2:4-7:28 are the only passages in the Old Testament that are not written in Hebrew. These passages are written in Aramaic. Everything else in the Old Testament is written in Hebrew. Aramaic is the so-called Chaldee language. Aramaic is a dialect related to Hebrew, which gradually took the place of Hebrew as the spoken language among the nation Israel after the exile. These passages are written in Aramaic: the central section of Daniel, one verse in Jeremiah (very interesting), and in those passages in Ezra.

Christ spoke Hebrew and Greek. When Christ was on the earth, there were three prominent languages – the Hebrew language among Israel, (just as a group), Latin was the Roman Empire language, and Koine Greek is the language of the New Testament. Your New Testament, in its entirety, is written in Koine Greek. That is Koine as opposed to Classical Greek.

Do you know what the word vulgar means? “Vulgar” means “common”. Most people think it means “cussing”, but that is not what the word means. “Vulgar” means “common, the street language”.

Unfortunately, in our day, common street language is cussing, but it wasn’t always like that; and it is not always like that in every situation. It is that way, unfortunately, in a degenerated society.

Anyway, the New Testament was written in Greek, and Koine Greek was the commercial language of the world at the time of Christ. The commercial language, the language of commerce, was Greek. It was held over from the Greek Empire.

Today the universal language is English. It is the language of diplomacy, the language of international communications. International communications over the airwaves is done in English. For good or bad, English is the international language for today.

So, just that way, Greek was the international world language of that day.

Now, you want to remember that information about the Old Testament being in Hebrew and the New Testament being in Greek. You will not see those verses that are in Aramaic on a test, but you need to remember that. When we study the book of Daniel that will be significant in Daniel.

Now, turn to Psalm 118:8, which is the middle verse in the bible. There are 14 words in that verse. What is the 7th and 8th word in the verse? The middle words are “the LORD”. The middle words of the middle verse of the bible are “the LORD”. *He is the heart of that book.* Since the King James Bible has been put out, there has not been another bible version put out that that is true of, and that is interesting. That is not the middle verse in any of the other versions that have come out since then, (since the 1880’s), because they have left verses out and added things and so forth. So, that does not happen to be the middle verse in other versions.

That is just a phenomenon that you will find as you continue to study your bible. As you study, you will find out interesting things about your bible.

Now, I want to spend the rest of this lesson pointing something out to you that is a real blessing to me – the connection between the living Word, (Jesus Christ – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God), and the written word.

(1) They are both called “the word of God”.

Turn to Revelation 19:13 – “And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.”

That is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is called “The Word of God”.

Hebrews 4:12 says, “For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful.” The written book that you have in your hand is called the word of God.

The living Word, (the Lord Jesus Christ), and the written word are both called by the same name. They have the same title given to them. The reason for that is that the connection between the living Word and the written word of God is absolutely astounding – the two are completely and totally inseparable.

Now listen people, that book (your bible), is not God. I just had to put my bible aside because it is coming all apart. You understand that the book is not God. You can scribble on your bible; you can tear it up and it will fall apart; it will wax and decay. God Almighty will never do any of those things. You can throw your bible in a mud hole, but you cannot throw God in a mud hole.

But, having said all of that, I will tell you that the closest thing you will ever come to God himself on this earth is that book. That is why that book is important to you. That is why you study it and become friends with it, and that is why it is different from any other book. It is the word of God, and it is so closely connected with the living God. The only contact that you have with the Lord Jesus Christ outside of the pages of that book is on an inner-subjective level (it is inside of you), on a spirit level. Therefore, God has given you that written word in order to be able to evaluate, by an objective standard in black and white, those subjective experiences that you have. Your bible is an objective standard by which to measure everything.

Now, the living word and the written word are just so close.

(2) They both have two natures.

Jesus Christ is the son of man, but he is also the Son of God.

The bible says, “Moses commanded you”, but who really wrote it? Moses wrote it, but God wrote it. It is man’s word, but it is God’s word.

Not only do they both have two natures, but they can also both do a lot of different things for you.

3) They can both save you.

Hebrews 7:25 – “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Jesus Christ is able to save people.

James 1:21 – “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

Jesus can save you but it is the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul also. They are two things, but with the same function.

(4) They can also judge you.

Acts 17:31 says, “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

John 12:48 – “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” The word judges you in the last day.

(5) They both live forever.

John 12:34 – “The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever.”

1 Peter 1:23 – “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

(6) You can receive both of them.

John 1:12 – “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.”

1 Thessalonians 2:13 – “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God.”

(7) You can reject both of them too.

John 12:48 – “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, that same shall judge him in the last day.”

(8) They are both described as “the way”.

In John 14:6 Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

In Psalm 119:33, the bible is described as “the way”.

(9) They are both described as “truth”.

John 17:17 – “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Jesus said, “I am the truth, and the word is truth.”

(10) They are both described as “life”.

John 14:5 – “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”
Philippians 2:16 – “Holding forth the word of life.”

(11) Both of them are called “bread”.

Jesus says in John 6:48, “I am that bread of life.”
He tells Satan in Luke 4:4, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”

(12) They are both called “a light”.

Jesus says in John 8:12, “I am the light of the world.”
Psalm 119:105 says, “Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

(13) Neither of them could be broken.

John 19:36 says, “A bone of him shall not be broken.”
John 10:35 says, “the scripture cannot be broken.”

(14) We are begotten by both of them..

1 Peter 1:3 says that we are begotten by the Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 4:15 says that we are begotten through the gospel.

(15) We are born of both of them.

1 John 5:18 says that Christ was born of God.
1 Peter 1:23 says that we are born again by the word of God (the incorruptible seed).

(16) We are sanctified by both of them.

Hebrews 10:10 – “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.”
John 17:17 – “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”

(17) They both liberate you.

Galatians 5:1 – “STAND fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.”
John 8:32 – “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth (the word) shall make you free.”

I am trying to tell you that the living Word, (the Lord Jesus Christ), and the written word are that close. God attributes his own attributes to his word, and the reason for that is that he is demonstrating that word to be the final authority. It is what he says.

You will hear me say this over and over in the next few lessons. *When you are dealing with God’s word, you are dealing with God himself.* And if you are going to deal with God, you will have to deal with his word. That is God’s design and inspiration. We will spend two or three lessons dealing with that, and you will see it in the passages.

A man by the name of Joseph Hart wrote a song that says:

The scripture in the word, Bare one tremendous name,
The Living and the written word, In all things are the same.

MSS 101-2

Basically, for the rest of this semester we are going to study the doctrine of inspiration and then the doctrine of preservation. I am very interested in you understanding from a study of these doctrines in the word of God how God wrote his word, why he wrote it, and what inspiration means (practically). And then we will study preservation – how God has preserved his word. You need to understand, from the scriptures, those two issues.

Then next semester as we begin to study the details of the manuscript evidence and the details of the controversies and the viewpoints of it, most of the ambiguities will take care of themselves, because you will understand the divine viewpoint in regard to the manuscript evidence.

Most people have a big problem studying manuscript evidence because they come at it from human viewpoint. They come at it with a lack of a thorough understanding of the doctrine of inspiration and preservation. So, we are going to start off in this semester with about fourteen lessons of study on those doctrines.

Now, maybe you did not know there was that much information to study, but there is. There is a great deal of information for you to glean and to gather about inspiration and about preservation.

As I have been studying and getting ready for these classes, it has been tremendously exciting for me. I have just enjoyed going over things that I knew and yet refreshing them in my frame of reference as I prepared these lessons. So, I am looking forward to this class, and I hope you will enjoy it as much as I am going to enjoy teaching it, especially this semester.

Now, later on this stuff gets kind of thick, but it will help you. When we get into the second semester, you will appreciate that we studied it the way that we did.

Now, there are four terms that you will have to understand and learn. These are very important words and terms, and I want you to be able to identify them.

Number one is Revelation. Hebrews 1:1 – “GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.” God has spoken. The term “revelation” is talking about God’s disclosure of himself. Without God taking the initiative and revealing things about himself, you would never know anything about him. You are dead in your capacity; you are unable to find out anything about God. You would not be able to communicate with him, but God has spoken. He has given a revelation of himself.

“Apokalupsis” is the Greek word, and it means, “to unveil a thing”. Imagine something with a curtain on top of it. Have you ever seen them unveil the new automobile models? They pull off the covering and everyone gasps. Well, that is an apokalupsis. That is a revelation; that is an unveiling so that everyone can see it.

Now, *revelation is the content of God's communication to man*. There are three types of revelation.

Romans 1:18-20 – “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

(1) – *Natural Revelation*. God has given natural revelation, and it is *in creation* according to the passage (verses 18-20). There is a natural revelation. Its contents have to do with the fact that (verse 20) they know his eternal power and his Godhead. In other words, there is something about the glory, the power, the deity of God that men know, and they learn it from creation.

Do you remember Psalm 19:1? “THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.”

Romans 1:20 says, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen.” It manifests some things about God. The “invisible things of God” is God's essence; that is who he is – his attributes, his character. There is a revelation of that in creation.

Now, the clarity of it is very obvious for verse 20 says, “so that they are without excuse.” That is why the old saying states, “You do not meet any 10-year-old atheists.” God has given the revelation, and it is clear.

But, men reject the revelation of God, and as a result, they develop intellectual and philosophical and theological systems to try to deny the existence of God. God put the knowledge there; but they reject it, and they go off into all kinds of other things. But, the knowledge is there – natural revelation.

God has given natural revelation *in creation* and also *in man*.

Romans 1:19 – “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them.” They have that innate knowledge. God puts it in them.

Now, man rejects God's revelation. Verses 21-23 says, “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.” Man rejects God's revelation, but my point to you is that God gives the revelation.

So, there is Natural Revelation. All men have it. They have it from creation; they have it within themselves from conscience.

(2) – *Special Revelation*. That is what that verse in Hebrews is talking about. Hebrews 1:1 – “GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners (at different times and in different ways) spake in time past.” He has spoken. He revealed himself.

For example, in Genesis 18 God spoke to Abraham. They sat in a tent and communed and so forth.

In Exodus 3, God appeared to Moses in the burning bush. God spoke to Moses and dealt with him.

In Genesis 32, God wrestled with Jacob. Do you remember that? How would you like to be in a wrestling match with the Lord?

Now, that is a special manifestation from God of himself to man. God has done that at various times in the past through the prophets. They would speak for the Lord, and he would make his will known. He has done it through miracles. And he also did it personally.

Matthew 16:17 – “And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” God the Father gave a special revelation to Peter as to the person of Christ.

Galatians 1:11,12 – “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” That is God communicating the information to man. Do you see that?

Galatians 2:2 – “And I went up by revelation.” Paul got some information from God that told him to go up to Jerusalem. It was special revelation.

(I am just giving you several verses that you are familiar with.)

Ephesians 3:3 – “How that by revelation he made know unto me the mystery.” The point is that those things are “special revelation”.

(3) – *Written Revelation*. It is not just something that God has placed innately in man, or in nature, as a testimony. It is not just a special time when God communicated with somebody, but it is what God caused to be written down.

A verse that we would be interested in regarding that is John 20:31 – “But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ.” God has those things written down for a purpose.

What we are going to be interested in regarding revelation is the fact that God communicates to man. He unveils himself. He reveals himself.

Number two is Inspiration. In revelation the information comes from God to man, and in inspiration the information moves from man to paper. They write the thing down.

You have the written revelation, and it comes by inspiration. We are concerned with the written revelation. How does God get the written revelation accomplished? It goes from God to man then man to the paper by way of the doctrine of inspiration. Man writes that which God wants written down.

Again, inspiration is the fact that man writes what God wants written down. That is as simply as it can be said.

2 Timothy 3:16 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God.” The Greek word for scripture is “graphē”, and it means “that which is written down, the writing”.

You want to understand something. Inspiration has to do with what is written down. You are going to hear me say that over and over and over again. In the bible, all the writings are given by inspiration. Inspiration is not God just giving the information to man. That’s revelation. But inspiration is man putting the thing on the paper, and the issue is what is written down on that paper.

Number three is Illumination. Illumination has to do with the way the information gets off of the paper and is communicated to the soul of the believer. How does the information come off the paper? That book is God’s word, so how do you get it inside of you? How do you assimilate it? How do you take it in? That is through the issue of illumination – the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit.

(We are not going to stay on these passages for a long time in this lesson, but in the next lesson we will study some passages in great detail. I am giving you some terms in this lesson, and you can familiarize yourself with these passages that I give you.)

1 Corinthians 2:9-11 – “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

Verse 13 – “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

He is just talking about the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit (illumination) whereby he takes the words on the paper and communicates those words to your understanding, and they are stored in your soul.

Number four is Preservation. Preservation is how the thing goes from generation to generation.

So, you have God revealing himself – communicating to man (revelation). Then he has a mechanism whereby man writes the communication down on a piece of paper (inspiration). Then he has a mechanism where the words on the piece of paper are stored up in the believer’s soul (illumination). And then he has a mechanism where those words that are

written down on a piece of paper are preserved from one generation to the next generation to the next generation, so you and I have them today (preservation).

You may want to read Psalm 12:6,7 as a reference for preservation.

Now, you need to understand these terms because you will see them over and over again. You need to know the differences of each term. When you hear the word revelation, I do not want you to think of preservation, or inspiration, or illumination.

Now, there is a sense in which revelation and illumination are associated, just as there is a sense in which inspiration and preservation are associated. It is important that you understand this issue.

The first two (revelation and inspiration) are a unit, and the next two (illumination and preservation) are a unit. Revelation and inspiration go together. Then illumination and preservation go together. The reason that inspiration is possible is because of revelation, and the reason preservation is possible is because of illumination. You would not have a revelation if God did not give it. You would not have anything to write down unless God gave you some information – revelation, communication, unveiling of himself. That is easy to see. There would not be preservation unless the word of God is stored in the soul of the believer. As the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, (illumination), identifies to the believer what God's word is, then consequently the true word of God is preserved through history.

Let's say that there are five different bible texts out there. How are you going to know which one is right one hundred years from now? Rather than writing down one manuscript and preserving that one manuscript through all of time, God has a mechanism whereby the church of the living God is the pillar and the ground of truth. And rather than preserving a single manuscript through time and saying, "That is it", and having everybody fall down and worship it, God has provided a mechanism whereby the Holy Spirit, that is in the believer, will be illuminated to the truth of the word of God and will be able to identify what is God's word and what is not, as he is instructed. Now we will see that as we go along.

But, revelation and inspiration go together, and illumination and preservation go together.

Revelation and illumination are similar things. They are a God-to-man kind of communication. Inspiration and preservation are associated because they have to do with the production and the preservation of the written word of God. Revelation and illumination are things that go on inside of the heart of a man, (or with revelation it could be an outward thing). But, they are subjective things. Inspiration and preservation are objective things.

Now, there is one other thing. Revelation and inspiration are complete. There is no more revelation, and there is no more inspiration. The second pair, illumination and preservation, are continuing. They involve a continuous process down through time. But, revelation and inspiration are finished. Why? The revelation is complete, and there is not any need for the inspiration that writes it down. There is not any need for any more revelation – God-to-man communication directly.

If you hear people say that Jesus stood at the foot of the bed and talked to them in an audible voice, you just tell them that they are nuts. They either ate a bad cucumber for supper, or they saw a demon or something; but they did not hear from God Almighty.

If you listen to “The 700 Club” on the television, that is exactly what they tell you. I listened to that program a couple weeks ago, and this man was reading a letter from a man that put his hand on the television screen, while watching “The 700 Club”, and his teeth were straightened.” I do not think a person that would say that has all of his marbles – either the guy that wrote the letter or the guy that believes it. I am sorry if that bothers you, but you will see as we go along, that revelation and inspiration are complete. And if it is not, that means when Pat gives a revelation and speaks as an apostle and a prophet, (which he claims to do on “The 700 Club”), if you write that stuff down, you have scripture written down there; and you have a continuous inspiration of scripture. That is nonsense, and that will destroy your faith! That means you do not have a complete bible. That is what those people believe. A lot of them do not even know that they believe that, but that is what they believe. Inspiration and revelation are complete.

Illumination, (understanding, gaining knowledge of the scripture), is continuing. Preservation also continues right through time.

Now, we need to study some various theories of inspiration. I am going to spend the rest of this lesson giving you some various ideas that people of theological systems have developed as to what inspiration is. I want to give you a verse on each one so you know how to react to them from the scripture. But, this is just basic background information. It is not something that is going to be life or death to your understanding. But, you need to know what people are saying out there in the world, so you will know how to react to it.

We need to study inspiration, in other words, what is involved in transferring the voice of God into the vocabulary of man. (I like the way they said that.) We are going to start out with some theories of inspiration. They are various and sundry, and they come from theology, which is basically human viewpoint.

The first one is *The Natural View*. The natural view says this: the bible is inspired in the same way that William Shakespeare’s Tragedies were inspired, or like Homer’s Odyssey, or Mohammed’s Koran, or Dante’s Divine Comedies, or whatever. In other words, the bible is just a high level of human achievement written by gifted, smart men for sure, but not written by God.

I will give you an illustration. When you fell in love with that dear darling that you are married to, and she had your heart just beating really fast and going up to your throat every time you thought about her, you would write poems to her. Every now and then you would start writing on that page and all of the sudden the poetry just sort of came. And you composed a verse to her, and it was just so easy because you were inspired to do it.

It has probably been awhile since you have done that. If your wife went home and said, “The preacher is right, why don’t you do that anymore”, you would have a hard time explaining why the inspiration has changed a little bit through the years, but it does.

Well, people that believe the natural view are talking about the bible being written in the spirit. You are inspired; you are in the spirit. So, when John says, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day and he commanded me to write” (Revelation 1:10), that is all they mean. It is just a poetic sort of elevated human spirit.

In 2 Peter 1:20, you will see “that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.” It does not have any private origin or meaning. Verse 21 – “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.” It came not by the will of men; it did not come out of man’s origin, but it came from God.

Another view is the *Dynamic Viewpoint*, which says that the content and the concept are important. You hear the word “dynamic” a lot in bible translation, and they are talking about “living, alive”. The dynamic theory says that only the main thought of a paragraph is inspired. In other words, God is living and his word is living. It is not a static word on a page, but it consists of ideas and thoughts; and the message is the issue. The dynamic viewpoint indicates that it is not just words, but what is important is the thought, and the idea, and the flow, and the meaning behind the words.

Now, the problem with that viewpoint is that in Matthew 5:18 Jesus says that heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall not. He said, “one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law”, meaning not one of the littlest parts, of the littlest letter, is going to pass away. So, it is not just the thoughts and the flow that is important, but it is the words themselves, even the letters.

We will see, as we study the issues of inspiration in the next few lessons, how there are times when the single letters in words make all the difference in the book. A whole argument will hang on one letter and one word. And the word will do that, and that is the importance of words.

With the dynamic viewpoint, the idea is the content – just the thought and the flow and not the words.

Do you remember that thing in Amos 8 that we looked at in the first lesson where it said that there will be a famine for the words? That is what the dynamic viewpoint teaches you. It is not the words that are important. Words only symbolize ideas, and therefore it is the ideas, and the thoughts, and the content that is important. That is Dynamic Inspiration.

When I went to school, that was the view that all of the people held where I attended school. (I should not say “all of the people”. I did not hold it, and some others did not hold it, but the teaching staff did.)

That view is associated with neoorthodoxy and the supra history. Neoorthodoxy tells you that whether Adam was a real historical person or not is not what counts. It is the teaching of the passage that counts. Whether Cain and Able were real individuals is not important, but it is the supra history – the thing that’s above the actual details. It is the thought, the meaning, and the concept that is trying to be conveyed that is important.

Then there is *Partial Inspiration*. Partial Inspiration says that only certain parts of the bible are inspired. This is the Modernist’s view, and the Liberal’s view. They only accept parts of the bible. They talk about love and brotherhood, and they reject the part that deals with sin, and righteousness, and judgment.

The answer to people that believe that view is 2 Timothy 3:16 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” All scripture is given by inspiration of God.

Then there is one that is called the *Spiritual-Rule-Only View*. That means that the bible is an infallible rule of practice and faith, in matters of religion, and in matters of ethics, and in matters of spiritual value, but not in its historical and scientific statements. In other words, if you want to know about creation, forget about going to the bible. But, if you want to know about ethics, and that kind of thing, it’s fine to go to the bible. As long as it’s a spiritual, religious, or ethical content question, the bible has good information. But, if you want anything above that, (if you are looking for historical accuracy), forget it! Do not worry about the flood. If you are looking for scientific statements, forget it! The bible said that the sun stood still, but do not worry about that, because that is a way of looking at something back before man had better sense. Spiritual-Rule-Only is the view that says that just the ethical, spiritual contents are important.

Jesus says, “Thy word is truth” (John 17:17). He did not put any limit on it.

In John 3:12, Jesus says, “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of* heavenly things?” If he could not tell them earthly things that were right, how will he be able to tell them anything about spiritual things that will be right?

Then there is the *Existential View*. That view says that the only parts of the bible that are inspired are the parts that speak to you. A lot of Modernists and Liberals believe this kind of thing. A lot of people that you are familiar with believe this right here.

Martin Luther King believed this view of the scripture. I say that so you understand that there are a lot of popular people out in the world that believe this – that the bible is true when it speaks to you.

A guy by the name of Kierkegaard developed what is called Existential Philosophy. He said that only the truth that edifies is truth for thee. In other words, the only time it is really truth is when it speaks to you and builds you up. So, the only parts of the bible that are real and of any value, and are really true, and really God’s word, and really inspired are the parts that really speak to you.

Have you heard people say, “Well, it is not relevant. It does not speak to me.” They say that like that makes a difference. That is like saying that you have to make Jesus Lord of your life in order to get saved. People say, “If he is not Lord of all, he is not Lord at all.” Well, there is not anything in the world more ridiculous than that. What in the world do you think you are ever going to do to make Christ any less than the Lord God Almighty? He is Lord whether you say anything about it or not. That is what he is, and who he is, and your response to it is not going to add to it or detract from it.

Romans 3:4 – “Let God be true, but every man a liar.” God is true, and that is all there is to it.

But, this view says that when it speaks to you, it is the bible; and when it does not speak to you, it is not the bible. A lot of fundamentalists are practicing the Existential View. Some are not honest enough to say it, but some are.

John 17:17 – “Thy word is truth.” There are no limits on it!

The last one is *Plenary Verbal*, and this is the one that you want to subscribe to. “Plenary” means “all” and “verbal” means “words”. The Plenary Verbal view of inspiration says that all of the words are inspired by God. And, that is obviously the correct view. And I do not say “obviously” just because that is our view, or my view; but as you go through this study, you will discover it more and more.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:35 – “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” What’s important is not just the ideas and the content, and it is not just some of the words that are important, and it is not just what it says about spiritual things, and it is not just when it speaks to you, but the words are important – “my words”. It is not the concepts, and the message, and the thought, but the fact that the words that I speak to you shall not pass away. “My words shall not pass away.”

1 Corinthians 14:37 – “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” The issue is words written on a page.

Now, the Plenary Verbal Inspiration View is what you want to expound, and when you meet people, or hear about people with that view, you will know that they are friends.

Every school associated with the National Council of Churches has one of those other five views. Every school, and every seminary associated with any church connected with the National Council of Churches, (and a lot of them that aren’t), believe that way.

I went to a Southern Baptist College in Mobile Alabama called “Mobile College”. The Southern Baptists are not officially associated with the National Council and the Dynamic View was the official view stated in the classroom of the Religion Department. The Natural View was the view of most of the English Department and the rest of the school, I guess.

The Plenary Verbal View used to just be referred to as “Verbal Inspiration”, but Plenary Verbal is the full title. You will never hear anybody refer to it as Plenary Inspiration, but you will occasionally hear somebody say that they believe in Verbal Inspiration.

But, some of these other views came along, like the Spiritual-Rule-Only view, and modified that. The Partial View and the Spiritual-Rule-Only View would say that the words are inspired, and the Existential View says that the words are inspired when they speak to you or when they talk about a spiritual rule. So, in order to counteract the Partial View and the Spiritual-Rule-Only View, they put “Verbal”. Then they got in a scrap with the Spiritual-Rule-Only View and the Existential View. So, then they put “Plenary” and they got “Plenary Verbal”. So, you will notice some people, especially old-timers, just call it Verbal Inspiration.

Modernists and Liberals are theological positions that fought fundamentalism back in the earlier part of this century. The debate was basically over inspiration, and that is why these different schools came about. The way these different schools came about was to get around the Plenary Verbal View.

Now, I want to say something to you about Plenary Verbal Inspiration. As a theory it has one glaring inadequacy, one real problem. Let me read you a couple of things written by some theologians.

This first statement is a real good definition of inspiration, but I want you to see the problem in this. This is written by Kenneth Wuest and the book is called Untranslatable Riches. He writes, “Inspiration is the act of God the Holy Spirit enabling the bible writers to write down God-chosen words infallibly.” Now, that is a good definition. God chose the words; and they write them down infallibly, which means they are all right, not just some of them but all of them. And it is the words!

Now, let me read you a quote by W. E. Vine. This is from his book The Divine Inspiration of the Bible. He wrote, “Inspiration attaches not only to the thought but to the words by which the thought is expressed.” He is getting after Dynamic Inspiration and the Partial Viewpoint. Then he writes, “Words are signs with a definite value. Defect in the signs involves defect in the meaning conveyed.” Now that is good thinking. Dynamic Inspiration says that words are just signs that represent concepts and thoughts, so what is important is the concept and the thought. But, if you have a sign that does not convey the proper thought, then you will have a defect in communication. So, inspiration has to attach itself, not just to the thought but to the words that are conveyed; because the words are signs by which the thought is expressed, and words have a definite value. A defect in the sign of the word, involves defect in the meaning that is conveyed by the word. So, that is good thinking.

He continues, “Inspiration of the scripture is inspiration of words, and the words themselves must be taken to express its real intention.”

Now there is one basic difference between those two definitions. Vine says that inspiration of scripture is the inspiration of words. He is exactly right! Remember that because you will

enjoy the fact that you did remember it one day. Inspiration of the scripture is the inspiration of words.

You really have to read these guys carefully. Wuest says that inspiration is the act of God the Holy Spirit enabling the bible writers to write down the words.

Now, what is inspiration? Is inspiration something that happens to the writer, or is inspiration involved in the words he writes down? Do you understand the difference between the two? Is inspiration what happens to the writer that allows him to write down some words over there, or is inspiration involved in the words that he writes down and not necessarily what happens to him? Are the men inspired or is what they wrote inspired? You must remember that the bible never says that the men are inspired. The bible always says that what they wrote is inspired.

All scripture, (graphē, writings), are inspired. It is not the men that are inspired. Now, something happens to the men. Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. We will study what happens to them. Something happens to them, but the issue in inspiration is what's written down on the page, not just what happened to the men.

The argument with the Natural View, Dynamic Inspiration, Partial Inspiration, the Spiritual-Rule-Only View, and the Existential View always centers around what happens to the men, and they miss the point.

Wuest is a Verbal Inspirationalist. But as I said, "There is a basic inadequacy most of the time in the way this thing is expressed, because attention is usually drawn to the man, and you are left with the idea that the men are inspired."

How many times have you heard people say that the men were inspired? But, there is not a verse that says that the men were inspired. The verse says that what they wrote was inspired.

Now, I know I am being real technical with words here. And I want you to understand that something did happen to the men. The Holy Spirit took the men and used them. In other words, something took place with the men, and we will study what took place.

But the end product, and what inspiration is talking about, is that there is something written down somewhere, and God wrote it. It is not just that he used some men to do it.

Now, let me give you a real inadequate definition. (This is in the theology book that I recommended to you.) This is written by Charles Baker – "Theologically it (inspiration) means the supernatural divine superintendency exerted over the writers of the Scripture, which guarantees the accuracy of their writings." If that is what the word means theologically, then you know why we are not studying theology per se here.

Now, there is a problem with that statement. I have, in my file, the Chicago Council on Biblical Inerrancy that met last year. They put out about a 40-point proposition on inerrancy, and I have read them all very carefully. The Westminster Confession probably did the best job of

any of them. But, most of the time, this as a definition fails to give all of the information that is necessary to ascertain the identity of the inspired words. And that is tremendously important.

So, you want to hold the Plenary Verbal View of inspiration, but you have to remember that the definition of Plenary Verbal Inspiration, when given at its best, fails in one important point. There is one important inadequacy, which we will address and that is that it fails to give all of the information necessary to ascertain the identity of the inspired words.

It is not enough just to believe in the inspiration of the scripture, and it is not enough simply to state that in your doctrinal statement. You must at the same time have some kind of biblically based concept of how to identify those God-given words. If God wrote a book, did he lose it? If he did not lose it, what mechanism is it whereby he kept it? Where is it?

Now, go home and read the constitution in your church, the doctrinal statement, and you will not be able to determine from it how that is accomplished.

The issues of preservation are missing in these things. People are left to themselves.

So, Plenary Verbal is a totally good definition – every word is inspired. But, it fails to convey totally all that that necessarily means. It is inadequate. It does not measure up, and it is not all that we are going to strive for in our understanding of inspiration, because we will need to know how to ascertain the identity of those inspired words.

So, I am not trying to carpet the definition of Plenary Verbal. I am just pointing out a basic inadequacy.

The Natural View, Dynamic Inspiration, Partial Inspiration, the Spiritual-Rule-Only View, and the Existential View are wrong definitions.

Plenary Verbal is the right one, but we recognize a basic inadequacy in it, and that is that it does not equip us to also identify where those inspired words are. We will have to do that on our own, and I will show you how to do that.

Let me explain the danger of the inadequacy. A man believes in Plenary Verbal Inspiration (every word is verbally inspired). There used to be a method of translating used down through the centuries called a Literal Equivalency. Because you believed in Plenary Verbal Inspiration, if you began to translate what would you translate? You would translate every word. You would try to put the words in the other language, because the words are the issue. But, now we have something that is called Dynamic Equivalent, and that is the basis of the translating methods of the New International Version. That is the first version that has been put out in English in the last few years (it came out in 1976) that has gone over and taken Dynamic Inspiration, and applies that method of inspiration to the practice of translating.

Now, the men that did that believe in Plenary Verbal Inspiration, but when they began to handle the word of God, and when they got into the practice of translating the word of God, they adopted and were affected by Dynamic Inspiration in their translating methods. So, as far

as their translating methods are concerned, they abandon the Plenary Verbal viewpoint, professing to hold it, and use Dynamic Inspiration.

I have a book on my desk that is written by a Grace Missionary who heads a Mission Society in the Grace Movement. He says that you cannot word-for-word literally translate any passage of scripture out of Greek into any language. And if you do, you are wrong because you are missing the concepts and the ideas and the message that the verse is trying to get across. Well, that is the Dynamic Inspiration View.

I wrote this gentleman a letter and said, "Brother, what is your view of inspiration?"

He replied, "Plenary Verbal".

Well, why doesn't that affect his translating? Do you understand what I am saying? That is where the inadequacy begins to affect you. It is when you get out into practice and actually put the theory into shoe leather out here.

Consequently there is a method developed whereby every translator uses Dynamic Equivalency at times. When you read in your King James Bible where it says, "God Forbid", that is a dynamic equivalent. There is no word for "God" in the Greek text. In Greek it would just be, "Oh no!" Well, in our language, "God Forbid" is the same type of strong expletive. It is a dynamic equivalent.

All translators use Dynamic Equivalency at some time or another in every situation. It especially helps you to get through idiomatic expressions, which is a legitimate thing. But, adopted as a total method, you abandon Plenary Verbal Inspiration. And you teach the next and the next and the next generation not to believe in Plenary Verbal.

MSS 101 – 3

We are going to start studying some texts in this lesson that deal with the subject of inspiration. In the last lesson, we talked about the theories of inspiration; and in this lesson, we will talk about the various texts in the scripture that teach the doctrine of inspiration.

As Christians, we are people of a book. We have real strong convictions about the bible, and we should be able to support our convictions. We need to know why we believe the bible and what we believe about the bible. So, in these classes, we are trying to examine the word of God and identify what the bible is and where it is. When you do that, the first issue is the issue of inspiration, the doctrine of inspiration – what the bible claims for itself.

So, this is an important subject, and we will go over it for the next three or four lessons. Then from there, we will go into a study of preservation for the rest of this semester before we get into the actual details of the transmission of the text through history. Then, we will begin to study more history than we do bible. But, I want you to have a good bible basis for what we are doing.

We'll start in 2 Timothy 3:16,17. (These were your memory verses from the last lesson.) "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Now, all scripture is given by inspiration of God. That is the bible's claim for itself. That is what the bible says about itself, and that is the boast that it makes for itself. And, that is a very basic truth about what God says about his word. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." "Pas, graphē, theopneustos" are the Greek words, and that simply means "all scripture is inspired of God". "Pas" is the word for "all, every".

We studied about Plenary Verbal Inspiration in the last lesson, with "plenary" meaning "every part, all of it", and that is the word "pas". All of it is inspired of God, and that means every part of it – the Old Testament and the New Testament. As far as God Almighty is concerned, the entire bible is inspired. In fact, as far as Paul was concerned, it is all equally inspired – the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. 1 Timothy 5:18 – "For the scripture saith, (2 Timothy 3:16 says all scripture is inspired; so if it is scripture, inspiration is there.), Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn (a reference to Deuteronomy 25:4). And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward" (a reference to Matthew 10:10, and Luke 10:7).

Now, do you see what he did? He quoted a passage out of Deuteronomy, (the words of Moses), and then he quoted a passage out of Luke 10, and he called them both scripture. He did not make any difference between them. So, they are both scripture – the Old Testament and the New Testament. When he says "all scripture" he is talking about all of it either way you go.

Now the Greek word for "scripture" is "graphē". Our word "graph" comes from that word. "Graphē" means "to write down, something that is written down". When he says, "all scripture", he says "all of the writings, what is written down on the page."

Now it is very important that you get this point. What does the verse say is inspired? Scripture is inspired; the writings are inspired. The thing that is written down on the page is the thing that is inspired. You want to be careful to notice that the verse says that the “writings” are inspired, not the “writers”. You will not see that in very many doctrinal statements.

Do you remember me reading those definitions of inspiration in the last lesson? I told you that sometimes the definitions are inadequate, even the Plenary Verbal definitions. Plenary Verbal Inspiration is the right theory, but it is inadequate sometimes (theologically). In the last lesson, I quoted a definition of inspiration from Charles F. Baker’s book A Dispensational Theology. He wrote, “Theologically it (inspiration) means the supernatural divine superintendency exerted over the writers of the Scripture which guarantees the accuracy of their writings.” Now, that is not what 2 Timothy 3:16 says. That verse does not say that the issue in inspiration is the superintendency over the writers, but it says that the writings are inspired. Now, that is important, and I want to drill that into your brain because you want to remember that the issue is the words that are written down on the page. The words on the page are the issue!

Here is another really interesting quote *“We are not to consider the men as being inspired so much as the words that they wrote down. It is not that they beheld a vision of truth and recorded it in their own way, but that they wrote down that which God told them and searched their own writings afterwards to endeavor to fathom their doubts.”*

Now, the Dynamic Theory says that – “they beheld a vision of truth and recorded it in their own way”. The Dynamic Theory says that you communicate the thoughts and the concepts and that kind of thing, but that is not the issue. As soon as you make inspiration the issue in the man, then you leave Plenary Verbal Inspiration behind. You cannot help but do it.

Now, I know people do not profess to leave the Plenary Verbal View. Maybe that person will not profess to it, but the second or third generation down the line will leave it. So, you do not want to teach people something that, later on, they will teach somebody else and wind up being a failure.

Do you remember when we talked about what a success in the ministry really is? Do you remember the passage 2 Timothy 2:2? “And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” You got it from me, now commit it to faithful men, who can teach others also. What is the mark of the success of a ministry? It is taking what you have and successfully communicating it to the next fellow who then in turn can successfully communicate it to the next person. And you have not been a success in communicating your doctrine, and what you are doing, until you have gotten past the guy you gave it to, and you see him go give it to the next guy in the same form that you gave it to him.

The problem in Christendom today is that we give it to the next guy; and then he redoes it, and he gives it to the next guy, but it is not the same as when we had it. That’s when they get to talking about second and third generation believers and how different they are. Do you know why that is? There is not a faithful communication of the doctrine at the primary point.

Now, you cannot enforce anybody but yourself. I cannot make you do this right, but I can teach it to you right so you can go teach it to someone else; and it will come out exactly the way it was when it started.

So, the point is all of these different ideas come up from a failure at some point in the adjusting of the definitions away from what the verses say to things that make sense in other ways.

Now, let me finish reading the quote. “We are not to consider the men as being inspired as much as the words that they wrote down. It is not that they beheld a vision of truth and recorded it in their own way, but that they wrote down that which God told them and then searched their own writings afterwards to endeavor to fathom the depths of what they wrote. He is saying that they wrote down some things that they did not even understand. Then they searched their own writings to figure out what it meant. Speaking in terms of our school days, it is dictation not composition.”

Now, you want to remember that contrast. Inspiration is what God says to the man. It is not the man getting an idea and writing it down himself. It is more dictation than composition.

That word dictation has fallen on bad times today, and people do not like its use. But, there is no indication, in what we will be studying here, that the writers are just glorified stenographers. In fact, we will go over a passage, shortly, that will show you that something does happen to the writers in this process. What happens to the writers is not inspiration, but the result is inspiration.

Go back to 1 Kings 13. I want to try to illustrate the importance of the words as opposed to the idea of it being the writers. In 1 Kings 13, there is a man who prophesies in the name of the Lord, and he prophesies something without even foreseeing that he was going to do it.

Gentlemen, you want to spend some time in 1 Kings 13. This passage is a real study for a man of God; it is about a man of God. God tells this young man to go down to the king and prophesy against him, and deal with the guy. He goes down and he does it, and the king reaches out to get him; but when he does, his hand withers up. The man of God prays for the king, and his hand is restored. Then, the king says, “You come on down to my house, and I’ll give you a reward (verse 7).

Verses 8-10 – “And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel.” God says, “You go down there and tell them what I have to tell you, and then get out of there. Do not eat anything and do not tarry. Do not even come back the same way. Do not get familiar enough with the territory to return the same way that you went.” So, the young man goes.

And on the way back, there is an old prophet down there in the land living in Bethel. You know this old prophet had to be a ‘compromiser’ or God would have used him to start with to go

down and rebuke the king. Anyway, he goes down and tells the young guy to meet with him. (He was an experienced man in the ministry, and he wanted to talk with the young man.) The guy tells him *No, I cannot come home with you. God told me not to stay, and not to eat, and not to drink and so forth.*

The old prophet is speaking in verse 18 – “He said unto him, I *am* a prophet also as thou *art*; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house.” The old man just lies to him. He tells the young man that God sent him a further revelation and *you are supposed to come home with me.*

Verse 19 – “So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.”

Verses 20-22 – “And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which *the LORD* did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.”

Before the guy got home, a lion ate him up.

My point to you is in verse 20. That old lying prophet down there has the kid down there in trouble to start with. Then, all of the sudden, something happened to him that he was not used to happening – the Lord came and put a word in his mouth and pronounced judgment on that boy. That old man did not foresee that thing coming. There is a man that spoke the word of the Lord without foreseeing that he was going to do it. He did not plan it. *The issue is the words not the instrument.*

Notice it again in John 11. Here is a man that prophesied something without even knowing what he was doing when he did it. John 11:49,50 – “And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.”

The Holy Spirit’s commentary (verses 51,52) – “And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” Now, that rascal never knew anything about all of that business. He said something that the Holy Spirit says is a prophecy about him dying for Israel and for the children of God that were scattered abroad. The rest of the nation is scattered to the four winds of the earth out there. And old Caiaphas never knew what he did. In fact, he probably died never knowing about it. The only way you know what he did is because the Holy Spirit wrote it down in the passage.

So, there is a man who prophesied something, (the passage said he did), but he did not know anything about it. My point to you is that the important issue is the words on the page, not the man.

I will give you another illustration. Here is a man who prophesied something without wanting to do it. Do you remember old Balaam? You should study Numbers 22-25 and get Balaam really fixed in your mind.

Balaam is over there in Mesopotamia.

The children of Israel come down there, and Balak sees them, and he sees what they have done to everybody that got in their way. So, Balak says, "I'm going to get me a prophet to come down here and curse these people." So, he sends men to Balaam.

One of his men says to Balaam, "Come on down because Balak is going to pay you real good; he has a job for you."

Balaam says, "What's that?"

He said, "He wants you to go down and curse the people of Israel."

And Balaam says, "Okay, but I have to pray about it before I go."

So he went and prayed and asked the Lord about it, and the Lord said, "Number one, you cannot go. Number two, you cannot curse them. Number three, you have to bless them." He told him that he not only could not curse them, but he had to go bless them. The Lord tells him *you cannot go with these guys anyway.*

So, Balaam went back the next day and he told those fellows that he could not go with them. (He delivered one of the three points.)

So, Balak sent the men back to Balaam to offer him more money – "the reward of divination". The men did just that, and Balaam said, "Well, let me go pray about it again."

And the Lord said, "Look Balaam, if the guys come to you in the morning and ask you to go, you can go."

So, in the morning Balaam gets up and he tells them that he is ready to go with them. But, that wasn't what the Lord said. Balaam just decided to go and so he went. When he got out there, Balaam wanted to curse them, but when he got up on the mountain and looked down on them, all he could do was bless them.

Balak, the king, hired Balaam. He said, "I am paying you wages and giving you a per diem, and an offering, and I put you up in the Holiday Inn down there. I am treating you real nice and buying you steaks for supper. But what are you doing? I hired you to curse them and you are blessing them."

Balaam said, "Man, I am trying, but it just will not work."

So, he goes over to another mountain where they have a big shindig going on over there. He gets up and instead of cursing them, every time, that rascal had to bless them.

Now, he did not want to bless them, but every time he opened his mouth out it came. One time, he finally said, “Let me show you what these people are going to do to your people in the last days.”

When he told them that, old Balak blew a valve! He had a fit!
My point to you is whenever you see the issue of prophecy and that type of inspiration going on, the issue is not the people and the man, but the issue is the words that are written down, (the writings).

I spent that much time emphasizing that to you because it is real important.

Now, that word “inspiration” is a different word. The Greek word is “theopneustos” “Theos” means “God” and “pneo” means “to breathe”. When you put those two words together, you have “God-breathed”. All scripture is given by inspiration, “theopneustos” – God breathed it out. In other words, when it says that all scripture is given by inspiration, it means that God breathed it.

What does that mean? It means that the scripture came out of the mouth of God. What do you do when you breathe? It goes in and comes out of your mouth. The scriptures came out of the mouth of God and that means that whatever the scripture says, who said it? It came out of God’s mouth.

Notice Natural Revelation in Psalm 33. Do you remember what Natural Revelation is? Natural Revelation is God’s revelation in creation. We went over that in the last lesson. Natural Revelation was authored in exactly the same way as the Written Revelation is authored. Psalm 33:6 – “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.” God spoke and they came into existence.

Folks, that is what inspiration is – it is God speaking. And when he says that all of the writings are God-breathed, he is saying that the writings came out of the mouth of God. Whatever the writings say, God says.

God dictated the words of the scripture through human authors. In other words, God reaches into the library of their vocabulary in such a way that the very words they used were the very words God had determined they would use from eternity past. That is where you take into account the human element. You take into account the fact that it is not a sterile kind of a thing – the writers were not glorified stenographers who had no part in it. God reaches into the library of their vocabulary; he reaches into their personality, and their circumstances, and he writes the words out through that.

Now, there are limitations on inspiration that we will study in future lessons, and you will see all the nuances of this. But the point that Paul is making in 2 Timothy 3:16 is that what is written on that page are the words that God Almighty put there.

Some of you people are writing with pens. Some of you are writing with pencils. You write with different instruments. What you write down takes on the character of the personality of

that instrument. I have two pens in my pocket, and one has a finer tip than the other. The tip determines the way the characters look in large measure. You can write with a fountain pen or a ball-point pen, and you will notice a difference when you write with them.

The different characteristics of the instrument that is writing are there as God dictates the words out, but God Almighty is responsible for the words that are recorded. That means that whatever the scripture says, God says, and that is important!

When you are dealing with the word of God, you are dealing with God Almighty. If you are going to deal with God Almighty, you will have to deal with that book! That is the way God has the system set up. That eliminates the Naturalistic Approach and the Neutral Approach of the Textual Critic. As we begin to study these things and as we go into the Critics and the history of the thing, you will read books written by people, and you will see people that believe that the bible is just like any other book. They think it is just a book. That is called the Neutral Approach, or the Natural Approach.

But, when you understand inspiration, all of the sudden you cannot believe that it is neutral. That is God's book, and it is what God said. When you are dealing with that book, you are dealing with God; and when you deal with the Lord, you have to deal with that book. You do not just go in the closet and shut the door and turn the lights off and hope he shows up. You have to get a desk and a light and start reading.

Turn to Acts 1 and Mark 12, and I will show you a few verses so you can see how strong this thing is.

Mark 12:35,36 – “And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost ...” (then he quotes Psalm 110:1). Jesus says that when David wrote down Psalm 110:1, he did it by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:16 (Peter is speaking.) – “Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas ...” (then he quotes Psalm 41). Who spoke Psalm 41? David did; it is the Psalm of David. But, whom does the verse say spoke it? The verse says the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke it. Well, then who spoke it? David wrote it down, but what he wrote down was what God the Holy Spirit spoke through him. Do you see how strong that thing is? Those words that you are dealing with are God's words.

Acts 28:25 (Paul is speaking) – “And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet unto our fathers.” Well then who spoke Isaiah 6, when you go back there and read it? You are reading what the Holy Spirit spoke. God breathed it! The thing that he wrote down back there came out of the mouth of God Almighty. God dictated the words of Isaiah 6 through the penmanship of Isaiah so that the very words that Isaiah wrote down were the very words that God determined they would write down. So, what Isaiah 6 says is what God said. So, when

you are dealing with Isaiah 6, you are not dealing with Isaiah, but you are dealing with God. You need to remember that.

Now, we will spend some time in the next lesson just reading some passages, maybe 50 or 60 of them if we can get through them, to try to get you to have the sense of what is going on in these passages. But, I want you to understand that inspiration means that the words come out of God's mouth. What the scripture says comes right from God.

The first part of Hebrews 3:7 says, "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice." That is a quote from Psalm 95, and yet he says that it is not the Psalmist that writes it, but it is the Holy Spirit that says it.

So, I trust that you get the idea that what is going on here in inspiration is God speaking the words so that what is written down is what God said. When he is quoting Psalm 95, he is quoting what is written down. When he quotes Isaiah 6, he is quoting what is written down. When he quoted Psalm 41, he is quoting what is written down. When he quoted Psalm 110, he is quoting what is written down, and he says that what is written down is what God said. The inspiration is involved in the words that are written on the page.

Here is the other main passage on inspiration, and this passage describes not so much what inspiration is but it describes the process by which inspiration is accomplished. I keep emphasizing this because I want you to understand how important it is – inspiration has to do with the words that are written down. But, that does not mean that there is not a process whereby God superintends over the writers so that can happen. Naturally that would have to be.

2 Peter 1:16,17 – "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now all of that happens on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17. Peter says, "We've been telling you about Christ coming back and telling you about the kingdom, and we haven't just been telling you stories, (cunningly devised fables), that we made up." He said, "Man, we were eyewitnesses of this stuff! We saw the Majesty! We saw the glory! We saw the heavens open, and we heard God the Father saying, 'This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.' We were there, and I can testify to the truthfulness of it."

2 Peter 1:19 – "We have also a more sure word of prophecy." What is he saying? He is simply saying that even though they had the eyewitness account and they were there, they have something that is more sure than the eyewitness account. You see, eyewitness accounts mean nothing in comparison with the written account of the word of God. "We have a more sure word of prophecy." The word of God written down is more sure, (dependable, steadfast), than an eyewitness account. Human experience is never the basis of your faith. Your faith always has to be in the word of God.

Somebody may say, “I heard people speak with tongues!” Have you ever heard people speak with tongues? Well what is more positive or more sure – the experience or the book? The book is more sure!

I told you before about the man down South that I know. He bought a book from a guy in California that explained how to speak in tongues. The man did not believe he could do it. He went into the closet and turned the light off, shut the door, did what the book said, and he spoke in tongues. While he was speaking in tongues, he said, “I do not believe I’m doing this!” He said, “Man, this is scary!” He could not stop, but finally he wound down and got out of it. Then he said, “Man, I’m going to burn that book up! That is dangerous!” And it is!

What do you base your faith on? If you base your faith on experience oriented things, you will never have a sure foundation. You get the point. He is saying that experience is not nearly as safe. If your experience (what you can see and what happens to you) crosses what God Almighty says in that book throughout your experience, you are too easily deceived by sight. We have a more sure word of prophecy, and eyewitness accounts do not mean a thing when you compare them to the book.

2 Peter 1:20 – “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.” It does not have its own interpretation. It’s not its own ideas and it’s not its own words – no private interpretation.

Verse 21 – “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man.” In other words, it did not come because the men wanted to write it down. It came because God told them to write it down. It did not have human origin.

Now that guy, back there in 1 Kings 13, did not even know he was going to do what he did. He was sitting there having a meal with that young guy who was trying to pick up some pointers on how to get the king to do what you want him to do. Then, it came! Old Caiaphas never knew what he did. Old Balaam tried everything he could, but he could not do what he wanted to do. It is not of human origin. Men just do not decide that they are going to do it.

The end of verse 21 – “but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.” The origin of scripture is by the Holy Ghost. God himself moved the men to be willing participants, to be willing to write down the very words that he wanted written down. How did it happen that the men wrote down the very words that God wanted written down? (And yet, they do it within the flavor of their own personalities.) It was because God Almighty moved on them in such a way that he created their willing participation. It is no wonder that when you are dealing with the word of God, you are dealing with God.

Look at 1 Corinthians 2:12,13 – “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” In other words, we speak the book. The bible is the very words that God the Holy Ghost teaches. It is not just the thoughts, and not just the ideas and concepts, but the very words are God’s words that come right from him.

So, the definition of inspiration, as it is found in 2 Timothy 3:16, has to do with the fact that all scripture comes right out of the mouth of God. In other words, whatever the scripture says, God says. God dictates the words of scripture through the human authors so that the very words that they use are the very words God determined that they would use.

There is a design, a reason, that God did it that way. There is a design involved in inspiration that I want you to understand. This is very important! You never will get this point unless you know the biblical definition of inspiration. And if you get that, you can understand this easily. God has given man a point of contact with himself, and that point of contact is the written word of God. So, when you are dealing with the written word of God, you are dealing with God. God's design in inspiration is to make his word equal to himself. His design in inspiration is to take his word, the written word, and make it equal to himself. So, when you are dealing with God, you are dealing with his word; and when you deal with his word, you deal with God.

I want to give you a couple of passages to illustrate this to you.

Do you remember the long list of passages that I gave you in the first lesson where the written word and the living word were described as the same thing? What was said of one was said of the other. Do you remember that list? Well this point right here is exactly why I gave you that list – God's design is to make the Living and the written word equal to one another. That is the authority of that book you have, and that is why it is called "God's word".

Here are a few verses that just show the power and the authority of the book.

Hebrews 4:12 – "For the word of God *is* quick, (alive, living), and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The word of God is quick; it's alive; it's living. Therefore, it can work in our lives; it produces things in our lives. You cannot have the word of God in your heart and in your soul without it producing. It affects you, and you know that. Paul says, "It works effectually in you that believe." It is living and powerful. It has energy and strength. It can accomplish things. It is sharper than any twoedged sword even to the ability to separate between the soul and the spirit.

Sometimes, you and I cannot separate between the soul and the spirit. Being able to separate from the soul and spirit is impossible without the word of God. You would not know there was a difference between them, but the book has the ability to do it.

Hebrews 4:12 says it "*is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The idea with the word "discerner" there is the idea of "a critic". The bible is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. In other words, when you read the bible, it reads you! There is not any other book around like that! That is a different kind of book. God has given the attributes of God himself to his word. Therefore the word can discern; it can read you because God can read you. It is God's word. That book will find out the motive that you are coming to the book with, and it will give you back just what you are coming for.

He says in Hebrews 4:13, “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his (God’s) sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” That is God. But, the antecedent is “the word of God”. He personifies the word of God. So, the reference there is to God and to God’s word. God’s design is that when you are dealing with this book, you are not just dealing with any book. You are dealing with God’s book. Therefore, it can go inside and read your heart. As they say in the world, “It will read your meter!”

Notice that he says, “the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword.”

Turn to Revelation 19:11-13 – “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.” Now, the person is the Lord Jesus Christ of course, and he had a name – “his name is called The Word of God”. Jesus Christ is equal to the Word.

Why would he call Christ “The Word of God”? He does that because God’s design in his word is that he is equal to the word. So, you can use the terms interchangeably.

Revelation 19:15 – “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword.” It goes out of his mouth. When you are facing the Lord Jesus Christ, as these people are, it is just like facing the bible. When you sit and read that book, ladies and gentlemen, that is like God Almighty sitting across the table talking to you. Don’t you ever forget that when you are reading it. If you will not forget that, you will fall in love with that book the way you never did before; and it will consume you, and it will pull you, and you will not ever want to get too far away from it. You will get to be real friendly with the copy that you use, because it gets to be something that is real important to you. But do not forget that when that word begins to deal with you, that’s why it is doing it. If God Almighty were to stand here today and say something to you, and you would do it because he stood here and said it to you, but you would not do it when that book says it to you, there is something wrong with you spiritually. It is the same difference, and that is the design.

Now listen, when you go out trying to preach to people, and you want God to deal with them, what do you have to use? You have to use the word. Do you get the idea?

I stood on the street corner time and again and talked to people and witnessed to them – people I never saw before were telling me things I never heard of before. And I took that word and just pushed them with it. Now, do you know why you can do that? It is not because you are so smart. You just keep giving them verses and you take that sword and stick them and stick them and you run them all over town. Why? You could not do it with all of your reasoning and all of your psychology, but you can with that book because when people face that book, they’re facing God Almighty.

Do you know what they will do to you when you begin to stick them with that sword? They will do to you just what they tried to do to God. The children of wrath are hateful against God. Do not be surprised when they do not love you. That is important for you to know. You need to know what you are getting into when you begin studying that book.

Romans 9:17 – “For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up.” That is a quote from Exodus 9:17. If you go back and read that verse, you will find out who said that to Pharaoh. Jehovah God said that to Pharaoh. The LORD God said that to Pharaoh, but Romans 9:17 says, “For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh.” That is an illustration of the power and the authority of the written word of God. It can be used interchangeably with Jehovah God. And God the Holy Spirit wrote that verse.

Galatians 3:8 – “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” Paul gives an attribute of God to the scripture – “The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen”. It has the ability to foresee the future.

You just cannot get around the connection; it is that close. If that book is not that close to God and it is not God’s word, then the whole thing is just a bunch of baloney; it’s a lie.

It foresees that God is going to justify the heathen, and therefore it says it “preached before the gospel unto Abraham.” Tell me something – did Abraham have a bible? No, Abraham did not have a bible. Five hundred years passed before Moses ever wrote any of that stuff down. He did not have a bible. Therefore, the scripture is doing something that cannot be done. Abraham did not have a bible to preach to him. So, how could the scripture preach to him? God preached to him! And Paul says that the scripture did it! Do you know what Paul is saying? He is saying that the scripture and God are one. They are equal. Now that is how close that connection is between them.

Folks, when you face the word of God, or when you handle the word of God, or when you use the word of God, or when you corrupt the word of God or abuse it or ignore it, you are doing it to God himself. And, that is the way he is going to look at it, and that is the way he is going to evaluate it regardless of what anybody else says.

Now, an attack on God’s word would be an attack on who? It would be an attack on God himself. If you wanted to attack God, what would you attack? You would attack the word. So, when Satan comes on the scene in Genesis 3 and says, “Yea, hath God said”, his attack against God was against the word.

People if you believe that the first sin that was ever committed was Adam and Eve taking that grape off that tree, you miss an awful lot. We have been over that passage in Genesis 3, and I showed you the things that happened before the action took place; and it all had to do with corrupting the word of God – adding to, subtracting from, watering down, questioning, and denying the word of God. Satan tried to get them to think that when they were dealing with the words of God, they were not really dealing with God.

Satan's design is to try to cause you to lose your confidence in what you are reading as the absolute final authority so you will turn away from the word. And, as soon as you turn away from the word of God, you will not be established in sound doctrine, and you will not be able to be built up and do what God gave you to do.

In your ministry, the issue is not promoting programs. The issue is not getting success in the eyes of the world, but the issue is taking what God Almighty says and letting that work in people.

Now, too many believers today do not treat the bible like it is God's word. They do not treat the word of God like they are dealing with God himself when they are dealing with the word of God.

People say, "I want to know what God's will is." What do you do when you want to know God's will? You read that book. People will get down on their knees and pray, but they will not read that book. I want you to know better than that.

MSS 101 – 4

When teaching this class, I appreciate the anticipation with which I look to the future. I have great anticipation about what God is going to do with all of you that are going through Grace School of the Bible. I thank God for each of you. These classes are a lot of work, but they are a great blessing to me, and I appreciate you for taking the classes.

We want to look at some texts in this lesson that demonstrate the doctrine of inspiration. In the last lesson, we saw the definition of inspiration, and we saw God's design in inspiration. Inspiration is God breathing out, or dictating out, the words of scripture. In other words, the words of scripture come right out of the mouth of God. They are God's words. All scripture is given by inspiration of God.

Now, the design that God has in inspiration is to make his word equal to himself. We have a saying in the world that says, "A man is as good as his word." Well, that is God's design in inspiration – it is to make his word equal to himself. It is very important that you understand that. When you are dealing with God's word, you are dealing with God himself – God's own words. It is not like any other book that came down through history.

Now, what I want to do in this lesson is to read through a list of text just to kind of give you the feel about what the bible says about itself. I want you to sense and feel how the scripture views itself. We will go back in the Old Testament and then look at the New Testament.

We will look at about 30 or 35 verses in this lesson. I have a list of over 150 good verses to choose from. I have chosen, maybe not the best, but the ones that are of great interest to me. We are going to read them quickly, and we are not going to spend a lot of time trying to teach through the verses. I would just like to read them to you. And I would like you to get a sense and a feel for the way the scripture presents itself, and how it views itself, and how, as you read the bible, you come up with a view that is definable in the way we have defined inspiration. It demonstrates God's design.

Matthew 22:29-31 – "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying" (then he quotes Exodus 3:6). Jesus asks them – "have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God." Years ago, in my life, that verse changed my viewpoint about the bible. That verse is a strong statement about how the Lord Jesus Christ viewed the written text of the word of God that he had in his possession. He said, "It's not just what Moses said, or wrote, but it is what God said to you. Haven't you read that?"

People, when you hold that bible in your hands and read it, you are reading what God says.

Speaking personally, many years ago, that passage (Matthew 22:31) was a passage that revolutionized my thinking about what God's word was. I was raised in a church that did not

have a very high view of the bible; but I got one from that verse, because I realized that what I was reading is what God said. When I read the bible, I am reading God's word.

You remember the account of Moses in Exodus 4. Look at verses 14,15 – “And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.*” Moses was to take his words and put them in Aaron's mouth. And, God said, “I'll take my words and put them in your mouth Moses, and you transfer them over to there.” It is pretty obvious what is going on.

Exodus 4:28 – “And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.” Verses 30,31 – “And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed.” Now, there is not a lot to say about that except that it is just pretty obvious. God puts the words in their mouth – the words that the men are speaking are the words that God puts in their mouth.

Exodus 19:25 – “So Moses went down unto the people, (he had been up on Mount Sinai), and spake unto them.” Here's what he did – “AND God spake all these words, saying” (Exodus 20:1). When Moses spake to them, he gave them the words that God gave him to say.

Numbers 11:24 – “And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle.” Now notice what Moses did – he told the people the words of the LORD. He got the words and then he communicated them to the people.

I gave you an illustration, in the last lesson, about Balaam prophesying even though he did not want to do it. He did not want to say what he said. But here's the reason he had to say what he did. Balaam wanted to curse Israel for Balak and get the money for doing it, but God would not let him. Numbers 22:38 – “And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.” You see, you do not have to worry about your bible. God used human authors – human instruments. We will see, in the next couple lessons as we study the limitations of inspiration, that it is important to recognize some of the issues about the human authors. And yet, my friend, there is clear evidence in the word of God. Here is a man who spake even though it was going against his will, and against his desires, to say what he said. “The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.” He said, “I do not have any choice; that's all that will come out of my mouth because I am God's spokesman.”

If I was going to be real sneaky in this lesson, I would have put one of these verses in the New Testament and then the next one in the Old Testament, and the next verse in the New Testament and the next one in the Old Testament to make you turn back and forth a bunch of times. That would be good for you, wouldn't it? It would give you some practice in finding the verses.

By the way, if you haven't learned the order of the books of the bible, you should do that. Sit down sometime and spend thirty minutes and learn, out of the index of your bible, the order of the books so you can find them easily.

2 Samuel 23:1,2 – “NOW these *be* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who was* raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue.” Now, that is some claim to inspiration. There is a man conscious of what is going on. The Spirit of God spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

Turn to the New Testament and notice the attitude of the New Testament people about what David said. He said, “The Spirit of God spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” What does the Lord Jesus think about that? Does he think David is a little overzealous? *Is that a hyper view of inspiration David? You should not feel that way.*

Well, let's see. Mark 12:35,36 – “And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Psalm 110:1). David said it by the Holy Ghost. He said, “God spake by me; his word is what I spoke.” Jesus said that David spake, (wrote the Psalms), and he said it by the Holy Ghost. Jesus confirmed the inspiration of scripture, my friend.

Notice that, not only did Jesus do this, but the apostle Peter did it also. I think we looked at this passage several times in the last couple lessons, but it is an extremely important passage. Peter is standing in the midst of the disciples and he says, “Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus” (Acts 1:16). Peter says that the Holy Ghost spoke the Psalms by the mouth of David. The bible has a very high view of inspiration. Peter obviously is confirming God's inspiration of the Old Testament.

Turn to Acts 28 and notice that Paul does exactly the same thing. Verse 25 – “And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying” (then he quotes Isaiah 6). Notice that he says, “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias.”

Now that word “Esaias” is the word “Isaiah”. That is the prophet Isaiah. You need to realize that sometimes names are spelled differently in different places in your bible. The reason for that is a language difference – the Old Testament is written in Hebrew and the New Testament is written in Greek.

By the way, both Hebrew and Greek are “dead languages”, and there is a great advantage to a “dead language”. When you hear people complain about the Old English, tell them there is a tremendous advantage to the Old English – it is simply a dead language, meaning it is not in use today. People say, “Oh I cannot understand this; they need to update it.” But, the language that we use today is in a constant flux; it is constantly changing. The Old English, just like the Greek and the Hebrew in which the scripture is found, are dead languages. It is an

unchanging language. The meanings are static. Therefore, you do not have to wonder what a word means in a given situation. We can find out what words mean and have one consistent definition for them.

The medical profession, for example, uses Latin. When I went to high school, I took two years of Latin. My wife, bless her heart, took four years. Can you imagine taking four years of Latin? Anyway, I remember the first Latin class that I took. The teacher said, “The poem that you want to learn is *Latin is a language, as dead as it can be, first it killed the Romans, now it’s killing me.*” We all laughed at that. But, you know there is a great truth in that poem. Latin is a dead language. Therefore, medical science uses it because a doctor can write down a phrase in Latin and one hundred years from now, it means the same thing that it does right now. Its meaning does not change.

God preserved his word, this King James Bible, and the language that he preserved it in is now a dead language. That is an advantage and not a disadvantage. You need to remember that. Greek and Hebrew are the same – they are dead languages.

Now, in the different languages of Greek and Hebrew, just as in English and other languages, you can spell proper names differently. Esaias is the Greek spelling of the word Isaiah.

Let me give you an illustration. My name is Richard. If I were in Spain or Mexico, I would be called Ricardo. It is spelled differently. Someone named Peter could be in France, and he would be called Pierre. It is an entirely different spelling. In Russia, the word John comes out Ivan. You’ve heard about Ivan the Great.

So, you can have the same words, but just spelled differently in different languages. You have a situation where one name can appear different in several different occasions.

While we are talking about this, let me give you another illustration. Turn to Luke 4:25 – “But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias.” Now that is Elijah and it is found in 1 Kings 17. There are differences in the spelling.

Look at Luke 1:5. I learned this lesson years ago due to Luke 1:5. I spent literally years trying to figure out what this verse meant until I found out that there was a difference in spelling. “There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia.”

(If you read Luke 1, you can figure out without any question that you can date the birth of both John and the Lord Jesus Christ if you can figure out when the course of Abia is.)

Well, I figured that much out, but then I could not find out who Abia was. I looked in the concordance but it did not help me. So, one time I was reading through my bible and I came across, in 1 Chronicles 24, the courses of David. And low and behold there is a guy in the 8th course and his name is Abijah, and that is the same fellow. One of the lessons that you learn is that a concordance does not always help because the spelling is not always exactly correspondent for the same word.

The fellow in Acts 13, Sergius Paulus, is Paul. It is just a long form of the name Paul. That is significant in Acts 13. From Acts 13 on, he is called Paul, not Saul but Paul. His name is not changed to Paul, but it says, "(who also *is called* Paul)". After the salvation of Sergius Paulus, he is then known as Paul.

That is not really what we are dealing with here, but I point that out to you because you need to be aware in Acts 28:25 when you see Esaias, that is Isaiah. The difference in the spelling is due to the difference in the languages, the difference between the Greek language and the Hebrew language.

Notice Paul's attitude about scripture. God the Holy Ghost said the thing. God the Holy Spirit wrote it, obviously confirming inspiration.

Turn to Acts 3. Again, we are just reading passages of scriptures. We are not trying to expound on them, but we are just reading them to give you a sense and a feel of what the doctrine of inspiration is like in the bible. Acts 3:18 – "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." God shewed by the mouth of all his prophets. In other words, God was speaking by the mouth of those prophets.

Acts 3:21 – "Whom the heaven 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." It is pretty obvious what is being said.

Turn to Luke 1. If you just read the bible and take what the bible writers and speakers say about inspiration, you do not have much problem understanding that the scripture came right out of the mouth of God and that God has made his word equal to himself. Now in Luke 1:70, Zacharias, John the Baptist's daddy, is talking. Let's start in verse 67 – "And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, ... (verse 70) As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, (talking about God), which have been since the world began." Zacharias speaks by the filling of the Holy Spirit. And what does he say? He says that God has spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets. There is no doubt about what these guys mean when they talk about inspiration.

Go back and read about some of these prophets. Go back to the book of Jeremiah in chapter 1 and notice that God told Jeremiah that he was going to be his mouthpiece. Jeremiah 1:4-7 – "Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee (set thee apart), *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." That is pretty clear, isn't it? Verse 8 – "Be not afraid of their faces: for I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD."

When you begin preaching the word and people start making faces at you, there is your verse. I used that verse when I preached in the Rescue Mission as a young man. I said, "Lord, I am

not going out there and being afraid of them.” Those men would make faces to try to scare me to death. At the age of 17 or 18 they could have succeeded, but a passage like that will give you some courage. God said that he would do it for Jeremiah, and he will do it for you too.

Jeremiah 1:9 – “Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.” Now that is fascinating! Jeremiah was to write down and give out the revelation of God in God’s own words.

Jeremiah 5:14 – “Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.” I will make my words in your mouth. God put his words in Jeremiah’s mouth.

Jeremiah 6:18,19 – “Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what *is* among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.” Jeremiah has given the people the revelation, the words of God in God’s own words, and when they reject what Jerry says, God said, “You rejected me!” God is equal to his word.

Turn to Jeremiah 36. We will study this passage in great detail later when we begin to study the destructive criticisms of textual critics. But, in Jeremiah 36, you see the word of God rejected. Jehoiakimism gets its start here. Jehudi is the man, who with the penknife, destroys the word of God and casts it aside. Jehoiakim is the king. Jeremiah 36:1-2 – “AND it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel.” Now, you need to understand something. There are a lot of prophets that never wrote anything down, but a lot of them did. When God gave the guy a prophecy, something to write, God wrote this stuff down too. You are not just talking about oral communication, but you are also talking about written words. “Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book” (Jeremiah 36:2-4). Jeremiah dictates to his secretary, Baruch, the words of the LORD. There is not any way to describe that except with the word dictation. So you do not have to be afraid of the word “dictation”. It carries some connotations that some of our opponents try to throw in our face, but that is what is happening here.

Verse 5-7 – “And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I *am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD: Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which though hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD’s house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities.”

Jeremiah 36:8 – “And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD’s house.” The

words come out of Jeremiah's mouth; Baruch writes them down, and then the scripture says (by inspiration – verse 8) that the words that he read are God's words. Jeremiah is writing down the revelation of God in God's own words and they are equal to God. When they speak, God speaks.

Notice Ezekiel. God gave Ezekiel words to say. Ezekiel 2:1,2 – “AND he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.” The spirit comes in and begins to get the revelation.

Ezekiel 3:10,11 – “Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.” Go preach it Ezekiel, and whether they get it or they do not, you go tell them my words. God gave Ezekiel the words to say, and he went out and gave them to the people.

Turn to the book of Revelation and you will see a similar kind of a thing. In fact the way you understand Revelation 1 is by understanding Ezekiel 2. (Revelation is a book about overcoming and inheriting.) Revelation 1:10 – “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.”

Now the Lord's day, of course, is not Sunday. Only the most juvenile of bible expositions would teach that the Lord's day is Sunday. I realize that a lot of theologians and a lot that goes on in the church today is pretty juvenile by that standard. But that's the standard (Hebrews 5). They are sucking on a milk bottle. That is an unkind way of saying it, but that's the truth. Those that are unskilled in the word of righteousness are babies, and they have to be fed with milk and pabulum and easy things. They mistake a lot of things. It is sad. There is nothing wrong with that if you are a baby, but if you have been saved for 15, or 20, or 30 years, you are just a carnal wretch if you are still acting like a baby. And it's wrong, and God Almighty is not for it. That is not what he intended for you, and it is not what he wants out of you. So, to come along and say that the “Lord's day” in Revelation 1 is Sunday is just a leap into the dark. The difference between that belief and the correct belief is the difference between what is going on out in the world in the religious system and bible-believing Christianity. Now, I am not going to preach, but that is a fact. The Lord's day is simply the day of the Lord, the future day of the Lord. The whole book of Revelation covers it – the tribulation and the millennium.

Revelation 1:10,11 – “I was in the Spirit (*like Ezekiel was*) on the Lord's day, (*transported up into the future day of the Lord*), and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: (*the Lord Jesus*) and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.” He says to write these things in a book. What is John writing in a book? He is writing what God shows him, and what God gives him. He instructs him to write down the revelation of God and to write it down in God's very own words.

Look at Revelation 22. John writes it down. Do not fail to understand what is going on in this passage. Revelation 22:18,19 – “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words (*the individual words*) of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in the book.” Brother, you better not miss it. Ladies and gentlemen, the words in that book are exact, and he says that you better not mess with them. The words that John wrote down were the words that God gave him to write down. That is the bible’s attitude toward inspiration.

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ also gave Paul the words that he wrote down. Turn to Acts 22. There is a very important dispensational truth here.

Acts 22:12-15 – “And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight, And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.” What did he hear? He heard the words of Christ’s mouth. He had direct revelations from Christ.

Turn to Galatians 1:11,12 – “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” It was not by the revelation from Christ, not just something sent to him, but it was the revelation of Jesus Christ. In other words, the Lord revealed himself to Paul and spoke with Paul face-to-face just like he did with Moses. He put his words in Paul’s mouth, and Paul went out and preached those things.

Ephesians 3:1-3 – “FOR this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words.” Paul wrote the revelation down, and the things he wrote down were the very words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice the very last sentence in 1 Timothy 6:2 – “These things teach and exhort” (referring to the things that he wrote in this book). Verses 3,4 – “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness. He is proud, knowing nothing.” The words that Paul wrote down in this epistle to Timothy were the very words of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul’s words were the words of the glorified Christ.

Folks, those passages are strong in regard to Pauline authority, but they are also strong in regard to the doctrine of inspiration. The words of Christ to us today are found in Paul’s epistles. Paul’s epistles are not made up of Paul’s interpretation of the things that Christ gave him. It is not just Paul’s interpretation of the ministry of Christ, but you have the very words of the Lord Jesus Christ given to Paul and written down by Paul for you and for me.

2 Corinthians 13:3 – “Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.” That is something, isn’t it? Who is speaking in Paul? Christ is speaking in Paul. The words that Paul speaks come from Christ.

I hope you are getting the sense that when the writers in the bible write, and when the speakers in the bible speak, they have the feel that it is God’s words.

Now the Old Testament is divided into three parts. Luke 24:44,45 refers to the three divisions of the Old Testament canon – the law, the psalms, and the prophets. We will study these things later, and I will give you all of the books involved. The 39 books in your Old Testament are the exact 39 books in a Hebrew bible, but the order of the books is different. We will study these things when we study the canon later in this semester.

The law, the prophets, and the psalms covers the section that is called “the writings”.

Now, in Hebrews, the law, the psalms, and the prophets are all said to be the words of the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 3:7 – “Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice.” That is a quote out of Psalm chapter 95. So, in the book of Hebrews you are told that words in the book of Psalm are really the words of the Holy Spirit. When you read the book of Psalm, you are reading what the Holy Spirit said.

(By the way, I suggest you learn these three references because you may see this sometime on a quiz.)

Hebrews 9:8 – “The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.” He is talking about the regulations written down back in the books of Moses, (in the book of Exodus), about the tabernacle. Moses writes this stuff down, and he says, “Now the Holy Ghost is signifying something, teaching you some doctrine by the pattern and so forth of the tabernacle that is laid down in Exodus.”

Who wrote Exodus? The writer of the book of Hebrews says that the Holy Spirit wrote it. So when I tell you that God the Holy Spirit says something to you, and I am quoting a verse of scripture, I am being scriptural; and so are you when you do it. In your ministry, the word of God is God’s word. Don’t you forget that! When you speak it, you are speaking with the authority of Almighty God; and when you face it, you are facing Almighty God.

Hebrews 10:15,16 – “*Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This *is* the covenant that I will make with them” (then he quotes Jeremiah 31). He is saying that the Holy Spirit is the one who says Jeremiah 31:31-34. So the Holy Spirit is said to be the speaker in the psalms, the law, and the prophets.

Now, there is something else that I want you to notice. I hope you get the feeling of how the bible views itself.

I want you to look at five passages that demonstrate the importance of the very words of scripture. I am talking about the words themselves, not just the book as a whole.

Jeremiah 15:16 – “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.” Jeremiah knew that the word, the book, was made up of words that are written on the page. The whole is made up of the sum of its parts.

Now, notice how important the words are, how in the scripture, the bible writers will make a point, and that a whole argument of a passage will sometimes depend on one word, or two words, or one phrase. The bible is not afraid to hang an entire argument, or a whole doctrine, on just one or two words in the text. The words are that important, not just the thought and the concept but the very words, because each word has meaning.

Notice the phrase in Hebrews 12:26,27 – “Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” Here is the whole argument that he is making – this word, yet once more, signifies that the whole thing is going to fall apart. He takes one phrase and builds a whole argument on just that one phrase.

Turn to John 8. The Lord Jesus Christ hung the doctrine of his deity on the tense of one verb. Jesus says, using that verb tense in John 8:58, “there stands the doctrine of who I am.” Jesus Christ is Jehovah God. The Jehovah God of the Old Testament is the Jesus Christ of the New Testament. Jesus means “Jehovah Saviour”. And Jesus built that whole doctrine on the tense of a verb, not just the verb but the tense. That is amazing! John 8:58 – “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

(Now the Jehovah Witnesses come along and say that should be *I have been*. They invent a tense, the perfect indefinite tense, which is not a tense in any great grammar that has ever existed. That is a figment of their imagination.)

But, he takes that present tense, *I am*, and that shows you who he is. He bases the whole doctrine of his deity on the tense of the verb. That is how important the words are in your bible; that’s how important the words of the Lord Jesus are.

Watch him do it again in John 10. In this passage he bases the doctrine on one single word. John 10:34,35 – “Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken.” Then he goes on. He is going to hinge an argument about his being the son of God, and he states that they do not have any right to argue with him about calling himself the son of God if the scripture called them gods. He takes that one word of Psalm 82 and builds his case on it.

Now, that should encourage you, folks, when you hang a doctrine on one word. That is how carefully the Lord Jesus Christ considered the authority of that book down to one word, one phrase. The verb tense is even important and not only that but the very number of the noun is important.

In Galatians 3:16, notice that Paul does the same thing on the basis of the number, (*singular or plural*), of a noun. “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; (*the word is not plural*) but as of one (*singular*), And to thy seed, which is Christ.” The whole argument of that passage there is that God used the singular, and not the plural, of the noun.

I am saying that the bible writers make an entire point and depend upon one phrase, or the tense of the verb, or a single word in a passage, or the number of the noun. That is how minutely close God calls it. The words are important, not just the phrases, or the concepts, or the idea, or the sense and the flow.

By the way, this says something about preservation also. God intended that his word would be preserved just that accurately. If God did not preserve the words also, how would you know for sure that the word was singular or plural, or that the word was in the present tense? If all these passages that we went over in this lesson are true, you would be breaking the scripture if you altered one phrase, or if you omitted one phrase, or if you changed the voice of the verb, or the mood of a verb, or the tense of one verb. You would break the scripture if you changed a single word or number of a noun in that book. That is how close God cuts it, and I want to train you in an understanding that that is how close you should call it also.

Your memory work for the next lesson is Jeremiah 15:16, John 12:48, and John 8:47. All those verses speak to the importance of the words on the page.

MSS 101 – 5

We want to continue our study of inspiration in this lesson. We are going to study the topic of the “defense of inspiration”. We have talked about inspiration, and we have defined it. I sought to demonstrate it for you, in the last lesson, by going over a large group of scriptures. I realize that I read a lot of verses to you, and we looked at a lot of verses; but I wanted you to just get the feeling of how the bible views itself.

In this lesson, I would like to go over more verses basically under the category of the defense of inspiration – defending the doctrine itself. We will have two points – (1) the testimony of the bible writers themselves and (2) the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ as to his view about the bible. I want to help you to just get a sense of the feel and the flow. I want you to see how the bible views itself; so when you begin to preach and teach about the bible, you will have the same view, and the same concept, of its authority as the bible has of its authority.

This afternoon some of us went to a debate about the bible text issue that was held here in Chicago. We heard men talk about inspiration, and it struck me as very pertinent to what we have been studying. Two of the men were professors, one from Bob Jones University, and the other from Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga Tennessee. They took the position that the Alexandrian text, the text that is the basis of the new bibles, is the best text.

Then there were two other men that took the position that the Received Text, the text that is the basis of the King James Bible, is the best text.

In their discussion, one of the things that I noticed was that when they talked about inspiration, both of the groups defined it the same way. They used, almost verbatim, the inadequacies that I told you about when we first began. None of them really had a biblical definition of inspiration that takes into account 2 Timothy 3:16 and what it actually says. *(It is important that you grasp those things.)*

Now, I am not trying to throw stones at those men, but I am trying to say to you that as you study over this material, you should be grasping the importance of what we are doing.

We are going to spend maybe one more lesson on the subject of inspiration. You might wonder why we would spend five or six lessons studying inspiration. The reason is that it is real important that you get the viewpoint of the bible itself rather than the viewpoint of all the critical scholars, and all the rest, that tend to drift away from the bible’s definition of inspiration.

In the last lesson, we went over a lot of verses. If you have a Scofield Reference Bible, you will find that Mr. Scofield has a chain reference of scriptures under the subject of inspiration. If you look up 2 Timothy 3:16, you will see that chain there. If you will follow that chain through, you will find some of the passages that we already went over plus a lot more. I picked out between 150 and 200 verses in the last lesson just to give you the feel and the sense. It would do you very good to just sit down and review the passages that Scofield gives you. Also, learn

the verses that I gave you, and especially the details that I gave you. Then, when you have a test, you will know that material.

We want to talk about the “defense of inspiration” in this lesson. Turn to 2 Peter 1 to look at a verse that you know by heart, and then we will look at several others with it.

First of all, we want to consider the testimony of the bible writers themselves. I picked this quote out from Finis Dake; and he said, “The bible writers say 3,808 times that they were writing the words of God.” Now that is a lot of times to say that what you are doing is writing God’s word. So the claim of the bible writers is very clear – they consider the bible to be God’s word.

2 Peter 1:21 – “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.” Now, how did the New Testament writer view the Old Testament? He viewed it as obviously being the result of the activity of God the Holy Spirit on the bible writer. I have told you that inspiration has to do with God breathing out the words, dictating out the words. Yet, there is a process whereby God does that. Peter, a New Testament bible writer, is talking about the bible; and he says in verse 20, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.” Verse 21 – “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Turn to Acts 1:16. Again, we are talking about how the New Testament writers viewed the Old Testament writers. What did the New Testament writers think of the Old Testament when they had it in their possession? The verse says, “Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas” (then he quotes the book of Psalm). David wrote down the Psalms; and when he wrote it down, that is God the Holy Spirit saying the thing.

Acts 3:21 – “Whom the heaven must receive (*talking about the Lord Jesus*) until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” God spoke by the mouth of the prophets, and what was written down in time past was that which God Almighty gave them to write down. There is no doubt that the New Testament men considered the Old Testament as being absolutely and totally inspired of God. They considered it to be the inspired record. They considered it to be what God said.

Acts 13:33 – “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” Obviously he is giving God the credit for fulfilling what is written in the passage back there – God writes the things down.

Acts 7:37,38 – “This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with* our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.”

Roman 3:1,2 says, "WHAT advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." The word "oracle" has to do with "the word that is spoken, a place where it is spoken". The "lively oracles" is the "living word." Unto them were committed that living word of God.

We went over Hebrews 3:7 before, so there is no need for us to spend a lot of time reading things that we have already gone over. Hebrews 3:7 talks about the Holy Ghost speaking, and he refers to Psalm 95.

This is the point. What do the New Testament writers say when they look at the Old Testament? They say that God wrote it; it is inspired. If you want to defend inspiration, if you want to defend the inspiration of the Old Testament, you do that by looking at the New Testament. There is no doubt about how that kind of a thing is to be done, and there is no doubt about the way in which the New Testament writers look at the Old Testament.

Turn to John 12. I was in Pennsylvania and New Jersey last week, and a man in New Jersey was telling me about a grace professor, a man who knows the grace message; and he believes in the inspiration of the scripture, yet, he believes what is called the Deutero-Isaiah. Have you ever heard of Deutero-Isaiah? "Deutero" means "two". There are 66 chapters in Isaiah. The first 39 chapters in Isaiah are a unit, and chapters 40 through 66 are another unit.

It is interesting that Isaiah has 66 chapters just like your bible has 66 books. It is also interesting that whoever wrote the book of Isaiah knew right where to make the break – after the 39th chapter. There are 39 books in the Old Testament. Also, the first 39 chapters talk about the judgment on the nation Israel and the captivity and that kind of thing. Then John the Baptist shows up in chapter 40 of the book of Isaiah. Isaiah 40:3 – "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert highway for our God." Isn't it interesting that Isaiah 1:2 says, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth", which refers to the heaven and the earth just like Genesis does. There are 39 chapters, and then there is a break, and then you begin in chapter 40 and see a verse quoted about John the Baptist. Then you read chapter 66 and you conclude with the new heaven and the new earth. The book of Isaiah is like a capsule of the bible. The second half of the book is about the restoration – what God is going to restore. The book of Isaiah contains law and grace so to speak – your Old Testament and your New Testament. It just fascinates me how the two things match up.

Now let me explain Deutero-Isaiah. It is the theory that states that one Isaiah wrote the first 39 chapters, and that an entirely different Isaiah wrote chapters 40 through 66. That is a viewpoint held by the German Rationalists – the German Higher Critics. It is a position, viewpoint, that a man by the name of Robert Dick Wilson of Princeton thoroughly defunct many years ago. He demonstrated it as not being true.

Now, this professor that the man in Jew Jersey was telling me about says that he believes in the inspiration of the bible, and he also believes that the book of Isaiah is totally inspired but

that two different men wrote it. He believes that Isaiah wrote the first 39 chapters and then a board of editors got the last half of the book together.

Well, let me show you a problem with that. I am trying to demonstrate to you how the New Testament confirms the inspiration of the Old Testament.

John 12:37,38 – “But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Now what is verse 38 a quotation from? It is a quotation from Isaiah 53 – “the saying of Esaias the prophet.” Isaiah the prophet wrote Isaiah 53, and Isaiah 53 is in the second section of the book. So, I know if there are two authors to Isaiah, I know that Isaiah the prophet wrote the second section in spite of the fact that some people say that he wrote the first and editors wrote the second.

Now notice John 12:39 – “Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again.” Okay, Isaiah wrote something else. Verse 40 – “He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart.” Verse 41 – “These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.” No doubt about it – that second statement was spoken by the prophet Isaiah. Where is verse 40 a quote from? It is a quote from Isaiah 6:10. Then I have a problem, folks. If I am a guy that believes in the Deutero-Isaiah, the passages in John say that Isaiah the prophet wrote the first part of the book of Isaiah, and Isaiah the prophet also wrote the second part of the book of Isaiah.

Do you know what you do with the Deutero-Isaiah viewpoint? You jettison it. If somebody comes along and says that they believe in inspiration and yet they accept that theory, they cannot believe in inspiration, because their theory contradicts the plain statement of John 12.

The reason some people think that the second part of the book of Isaiah was written by somebody else is because there are obviously two parts in the book, and the second part is so much different in style and viewpoint from the first that they say that one guy could not have written all of it. But, the answer to that is in the subject matter. The first part of the book has the subject matter of judgment, and it is a doleful kind of a thing. The second part of the book has the subject matter of restoration, which is obviously a lot happier subject.

There are people that believe that there are three writers to the book of Isaiah. They say that the second author writes chapters 40 to 59 and that the third author writes chapters 60 to 66. All that tells you is that once you start that kind of stuff, it never ends.

Your New Testament writers give ample evidence that the Old Testament is exactly what it claims to be – the inspired word of God. The apostle Paul sited scripture over and over again. Read the book of Romans. In Romans 4, Paul talks about Abraham, and he never questions whether the fact that Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness is true or not. He just accepts it.

Paul talks about Isaac in Romans 9. He talks about Esau and Jacob in Romans 9. He talks about Pharaoh, and Sodoma and Gomorrha, in Romans 9. In Romans 3, he quotes Psalm 14,

Psalm 5, Psalm 140, and right on down the list; and he says that they are all scripture. He never questions or denies the Old Testament, rather, he quotes the Old Testament over and over again.

The Old Testament is quoted in the New Testament about 250 times, and it is alluded to approximately 850 times. There are only 5 books in the Old Testament that are not quoted in the New Testament – Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. All of the other books are quoted and alluded to in the New Testament. The New Testament writers view the Old Testament as authoritative and authentic.

How did the New Testament writers view themselves? The New Testament views itself as scripture. The New Testament writers view other New Testament writers as writing scripture. In other words, they viewed it as inspired.

1 Timothy 5:18 – “For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.” Now that first quote, “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn”, is found in Deuteronomy 25:4. The second quote, “the labourer *is* worthy of his reward”, is found in Luke 10:7. So you have a quote from Deuteronomy 25:4 and a quote from Luke 10:7, and they are both called scripture. Paul considers Luke 10 just as authoritative as Deuteronomy 25. That is important for you to realize, so you understand that Paul and the other New Testament writers consider each other as equally inspired as all the rest of the word of God.

2 Peter 3:15,16 – “And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” It is obvious that Peter considers Paul’s writings part of scripture just like the other scriptures. I am trying to say to you that when the New Testament writers look out and see the other guys writing books, they say, “Hey, that is scripture too.” They recognize what is going on. They know and recognize each other’s books, and there is a process whereby they are able to authoritatively identify which books are there.

When we begin studying preservation, you will see that process. But right now, you just need to know that they can identify each other and consider each other on equal basis with the rest of the scripture.

Now I want you to notice how the writers of the New Testament view themselves. What did Paul think about what he was writing?

1 Thessalonians 4:8 – “He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.” In other words, if you despise what Paul is telling you, you despise what God said.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 – “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, ...” That expression “by the word of the Lord” denotes a special and specific prophetic

announcement, and it is used repeatedly in the Old Testament to describe God's word coming to someone and going out through them.

Let's look at a couple of verses. There is a formula that denotes a specific and special prophetic announcement – God's word. Paul is very conscious of the fact that he is giving out more than just his own word and that he is giving out God's word.

Genesis 15:1 – "AFTER these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, ..." Do you see that? The word of the LORD comes to Abraham in a vision and gives him the communication.

There are a number of passages like this, but I just picked out a couple samples for you.

2 Samuel 7:4 – "And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying." Do you see that formula – the word of the LORD? It has to do with the prophetic announcement. Paul knew what he was doing.

1 Kings 12:22 – "But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying." The word comes to him.

Now, you can run other references in the Old Testament like that and see the emphasis of what Paul is doing in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 when he says, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord." He is saying, "What I am writing to you people here is God Almighty's communication to you." Paul is conscious of what he is doing.

By the way, 1 Thessalonians is probably Paul's first epistle (if not his first, then it is his second). But his very first epistles bear the highest claim to inspiration of any of them. He makes the highest claim to inspiration right at the beginning. By that, I mean that he does not start out and then get on down the road and say, "Well, it looks like I did have it!" He starts out right at the beginning knowing what he is doing.

1 Corinthians 14:37 is a verse you need to learn in a lot of different ways not just in regard to the scripture but in regard to the dispensational message given to us through Paul. It is a very powerful verse for that, but for now just think about what he is writing. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Folks, the things that Paul wrote were the commandments of God. He did not have any doubt in his mind about what he was doing. Do you see that?

Look at 1 Timothy 6. When you read these passages about Paul's authority as he wrote, you know that he is conscious of what he is doing. That shows you his authority as the apostle of the Gentiles, but it also shows you his estimation of the scripture. 1 Timothy 6:3 – "If any man teach otherwise, *(he is talking about what he has written in this book)*, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." It is obvious that Christ's words were coming from Paul's mouth, and he was conscious of that fact.

2 Corinthians 13:3 says, “Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me...” The words of Jesus Christ were coming from Paul’s mouth, and he was conscious of that.

I am giving you a lot of passages, because I am trying to get you to feel the sense of what is happening here. 2 Thessalonians 3:6 – “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.” Verse 14 – “And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.” Paul is commanding them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to do some things; and he says that if the man does not obey our word, (the issue is the epistle that he is writing), that they are to have no company with him.

Turn to 2 Peter 3 and notice Peter’s attitude. This is a really good verse. Notice how Peter considers his words on an equal basis with the Old Testament prophets. 2 Peter 3:1,2 – “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.” He says, “I want you to remember what the Old Testament prophets say and what I say.” He does not consider that there would be any gap between them, but total equality.

There is something interesting in the above verses about dispensationalism. Peter says, “I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; be mindful what the Old Testament prophets said and what I am saying.” Peter is not giving them a new revelation of a mystery, and he is not commending them to the mystery to follow it. He is reminding them about something that is in your Old Testament prophets that he, as an apostle of Christ, learned and preached – the kingdom message. He is reminding them about it even now.

So, when you get down to 2 Peter 3:15,16 and he talks to them about this stuff that Paul gave him, do not always assume that he is just turning them over to Paul. That is not what he is doing. (If you do not know what he is doing, you need to work on that passage for awhile and figure it out.)

My point to you is that Peter considered what he was saying as equal to the Old Testament.

By the way, let me give you a couple of verses to read in the book of Revelation – 22:18; 1:3,19; 19:9; 21:5. If you will read those verses, you will see the same kind of thing that we just looked at in 2 Peter.

Now, I want to look at the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ believed that every word in the bible was the word of God. He even believed the very words in the bible.

In the last lesson, I gave you some references about how important the very words are in the bible. I gave you references that talked about one phrase and how the bible writers would make a point and hang a doctrine on one phrase, or the tense of a verb, or on a single word, or on the number of a noun.

Well, the Lord Jesus Christ does that just the same way. In Matthew 22, beginning at verse 24, you come down through a passage where they begin to ask him about the woman who had the seven husbands. Matthew 22:29-32 – “Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” I have told you this before – that passage right there turned my apple cart upside down one day about inspiration. You are reading what God Almighty wrote!

The point is that the whole argument turns on the fact that God says, “I am.” It is the tense of the verb that is important. He does not say, “I was a God of the living when they were alive.” He says, “I am, right now, the God of the living.” Then the implication is that Abraham, who is dead, is included in the verse. It says, “I am”. Right now, in the present tense, God is the God of Abraham, so Abraham must be alive. Isaac must be alive and Jacob must be alive. That is the issue that is being dealt with, and the whole thing turns on the tense of that verb – present tense.

Look at Matthew 22:41 – “While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them.” It is interesting – sometime you should study down through Matthew 22. Do you know what Jesus did every time they ask him a question? He answered them! Do you know what the Pharisees did when Jesus asked them a question? They could not answer him.

(Every time you check God out, God will have an answer. Brother, when you stand at the judgment before God and he asks you the questions, you can forget it.)

Matthew 22:42-44 – “Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son of David*. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?” If David called you Lord, how are you his son? Now, there is a theological knot if you ever saw one. (If you were a Pharisee, you would run for the hills when that happened.)

Matthew 22:46 – “And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.” They left him alone. There is a lot of humor in that, when you get to thinking about religious people. There is a lot of the Lord’s wit in this passage.

But, my point is that he hangs them on one word. David called him Lord. Well, how can Jesus be David’s son and his Lord? He takes that one word and builds a question on it. The Lord Jesus Christ believed the very words of the bible.

I recently spoke with a man about Mark 1:2 where it says, “As it is written in the prophets.” The new bibles say, “As it is written in Isaiah.” (But, there is a problem with that translation because it is really written in Malachi.) He said to me, “Do not worry about that word “written”, because it really means that it was just spoken. If you were a first-century man, you would not mind that.”

Well, my problem is that I am not a first-century man, and I cannot believe that a first-century man would not have cared either.

This man said, “The word does not count, it is the concept, the idea.” That is dynamic inspiration. He is a man professing to believe in verbal inspiration and yet, in practice, he does not. I talked to you about that before, and you have to be careful about that. That is why you want to watch every word.

Now, watch how closely the Lord Jesus Christ uses the words here.

Luke 4:16-17 – “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written.” He then begins to quote Isaiah 61:1,2.

Notice verse 20 – “ And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister; and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.”

Now I hope you know what he does in verses 18 and 19. He quotes Isaiah 61:1 and then he begins to quote Isaiah 61:2 in Luke 4:19 – “To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” Then he closed the book, and put the book down, and sat down.

Now, why did he do that? Why did he quit reading Isaiah 61:2 right in the middle of a verse? Look back at Isaiah 61:2 – “To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God.” Do you see why he quit reading in the middle of the verse? He quotes, “To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD”, which is the First Coming of Christ. “The day of vengeance” is the Second Coming. So, Jesus Christ rightly divides Isaiah 61:2 right at the comma, because the First Coming and Second Coming are separated by the comma. Jesus Christ considered the words on the page, in Isaiah 61:2, so important that he stopped right in the middle of the verse. He was practicing right division.

My point to you is that he believed the very words, and he divided between them. The attitude of Christ is that the words are the very word of God.

When you believe the bible contains the words of God, you are in good company.

The Lord Jesus Christ believed in the power of the word of God. He said in John 10:35, “... the scripture cannot be broken.”

In Matthew 4:3-10, when the Lord Jesus Christ was tempted, he answered Satan every time with the words “it is written”. Jesus said, “It is written”, and then he said, “It is written again.” He just kept coming back with verses. He recognized that the power, spiritually, is in the book, in the words of God.

Jesus Christ not only believed the very words of scripture; he not only acknowledged the power of scripture, but he also fulfilled the prophecies of scripture. Matthew 26:24 – “The Son of man goeth as it is written of him.” He is claiming to be the Son of man; and he says, “I am

going forth to do what was written of me.” He is going to fulfill what God wrote about him. That is interesting. Jesus Christ came and fulfilled the scriptures.

Matthew 26:54 – “But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” He is fulfilling the prophecies of the scripture. He has come to do exactly what they say must be done.

Matthew 27:46 – “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He is quoting the scripture there (Psalm 22:1) in fulfillment.

(You can go on and on with these verses. You can look up a number of those kinds of references yourself about Jesus fulfilling the scripture.)

Matthew 5:17,18 is a classic verse – “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets (*the Old Testament*): I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” Jesus came to fulfill the thing, to do what they said was to be done. He recognized their authority in that regard, and he also verified their truthfulness. Jesus Christ never one time questioned the Old Testament. He always quoted it in such a way as to endorse it, and he endorsed it as verbally inspired.

Turn to John 5 and we will look at a few more verses. Here is a very good passage about Moses and the Mosaic authorship.

There are people that say that Moses did not write the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In fact, these people say that Moses could not even write. I have never quite understood how they figured that out, since Moses was trained in the School of the Egyptians and had all their wisdom according to Acts 7.

Anyway, they say that the guys who wrote Moses’ books are J, E, P, D, R. We will study this at great length next semester. This is called the Graph-Wellhausen Theory. The Jehovist passages, the passages where God is called by the name of Jehovah, are written by “J”. The passages where God is called by the name of Elohim are written by “E”. The priestly passages are written by “P”. The Deuteronomic passages, the law passages, are written by “D”. “R” is a redactor or an editor that put all this stuff together. (That is just like that stuff about Isaiah that we just looked at.)

Look what Jesus says in John 5:45,46. “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.” Moses wrote those books, folks.

John 5:47 – “But if ye believed not his writings, how shall ye believe my words.” (And you won’t!)

Jesus Christ verifies the truthfulness of the scriptures.

For example:

- He talks about Adam and Eve in Matthew 19:4,5.
- He talks about the flood of Noah in Matthew 24:37,38.
- He talks about Sodom and Gomorra in Luke 17:29,32.
- He talks about the burning bush in Matthew 12:26.
- He talks about the manna in the wilderness in John 6:31-51.
- He talks about the brazen serpent in John 3:14.
- He talks about Jonah and the whale in Matthew 12:40.
- He talks about Daniel and the prophet in Matthew 24.

You can go on and on with verses like that to prove that the historic accuracy of the scripture is confirmed.

Turn to John 16 and notice that Jesus Christ gave an advanced announcement concerning the inspiration of the New Testament. The New Testament had not been written when Jesus Christ was on the earth, and yet he gives a pre-authenticating announcement about the New Testament. This is a very important passage for you to grasp. John 16:12-14 – “I have yet many things to say unto you, (*the apostles in the upper room the night before his death*), but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.” The Lord Jesus Christ pre-announced the coming of the Holy Spirit in such a way that guarantees the authenticity and genuineness of the New Testament.

There are two words that you need to remember: authenticity and genuineness. “Authenticity” means “truthfulness, an accuracy”. When we say that the scriptures are authentic, we mean that they are true, and they are accurate. “Genuineness” means “the scriptures are written by who they say they were written by”.

The genuineness of Genesis means that Moses really wrote it. The authenticity of Genesis means that what is written is true and accurate.

Those two words, genuine and authentic, are important in textual studies.

Notice how Christ guarantees the authenticity and the genuineness of the New Testament. John 16:13 – “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.”

You want to be able to get John 16:12,13 and John 14:26 together. John 14:26 – “But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” He is going to bring all things to remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. So when those men, (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), begin to write down the gospel account, Jesus Christ has already given assurance of the fact that the Holy Spirit is going to bring to remembrance

those things. There is a pre-authentication of the gospel records. We can now look back and see how he was given a statement that pre-announced and guaranteed the authenticity of those books.

In John 16:13, he says that the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth and that he will show you things to come. In other words, he is going to give you the epistles, guide you into the truth there – that would be the epistles that explain what he taught. Then, the things to come would obviously be the book of the Revelation and the prophetic elements.

So, you have all three issues there. You have the historical accounts of his life. You have the interpretative accounts in the epistles.

(Of course, now we understand that Paul's epistles are in there too. And Paul says, "These things that I'm giving you are the words that Christ puts in my mouth. So those things are authenticated.")

And then you have the revelation for the things that come.

This passage is very important in understanding that the New Testament books were pre-authenticated; and the genuineness, and the authenticity, and guarantee of that was given ahead of time for the books.

You need to remember that Jesus Christ never one time questioned the Old Testament. He always quoted it in such a way as to endorse it. When he endorsed it, he endorsed it as verbally inspired.

Remember those three things and fix them in your mind.

- He never questioned the Old Testament.
- He always quoted it in such a way as to endorse it.
- He endorsed it as verbally inspired.

There are the only three possibilities concerning that testimony of Christ to scripture. Number one, is the suggestion that there are errors in the scripture, but Jesus did not know about them; so he really is not God. (And if he is not God, you can just throw the whole thing out the window, and we can stop studying right now.) Number two, is that there are errors, and Jesus Christ knew about them, and he covered them up. (Well, then he is not holy, and he would not do for a Savior.) Number three, is that there are not any errors, and that it is God's word; and when you are dealing with the bible, you are dealing with God himself. (That is the one we opt for.)

(Your memory verses are John 16:12,13, John 14:26.)

MSS 101 – 6

We will start in Matthew 4:4 where the Lord Jesus is speaking to Satan. “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” We have been talking about inspiration, and Matthew 4:4 is a clear definition of inspiration. It proceeds out of the mouth of God.

In previous lessons, we talked about inspiration, and defined it, and tried to demonstrate it, and tried to defend it. This will be the last lesson on the doctrine of inspiration per se.

After this lesson, we will begin to study the issues of preservation and go on from there. In this lesson we will consider the implications of inspiration, and we will do it under different headings.

But first of all, I want to make some disclaimers about inspiration – some things that inspiration does not mean. There are some limits to the doctrine of inspiration that you need to remember and realize; because you can go overboard if you do not adjust your thinking for the things that are there.

So, the first heading will be “Disclaimers about inspiration” and there will be eight points under that heading.

A – Disclaimers about inspiration.

Number one – Inspiration does not mean that all parts of the bible are equally important. It only means that they are equally inspired. You understand that. Judges is not as important to you as the book of John. Ephesians is more important to you than the book of Revelation. It is all God’s word, and because of that, it is important and profitable; but you must remember to rightly divide the scripture to get the profit that God intended for you in the bible. So, it is all equally inspired, but it is just not all of equal importance. When you talk about the inspired word of God, it is every bit inspired; but you are not describing the importance of it as far as its practical application to you.

I attended some meetings recently where we discussed some issues about inspiration and preservation. We were discussing, among other things, the sign gifts. There was a professor from Bob Jones University in the meeting who insisted that Mark 16 did not belong in the bible. He said that the ending of Mark 16 should not be in the bible; and in derision, he called it the “snake handler’s passage”. He said, “Nobody believes this should be in the bible; it’s the snake handler’s passage.”

Disregard the fact that Mark 16 is in 600 manuscripts and only omitted in 2, and in one of those manuscripts where Mark 16 is omitted, there is a vacant place where they knew it should have been. The 2 manuscripts that it is not in, are the two this professor thinks are the best; and the 1 where it has obviously been erased, he thinks is the best of the best.

Understand, there I was speaking with a man that was trying to get around handling snakes by taking Mark 16 out, and I was defending Mark 16 as part of the inspired word of God.

Now, there is an easier explanation for Mark 16 that allows the bible to be the bible, and that explanation is the dispensational answer.

The bible is equally inspired, but that does not mean that all the parts of the bible are of equal importance to you. You must remember to rightly divide the word, and right division does not violate the doctrine of inspiration.

Number two – Inspiration does not guarantee the inspiration of any particular modern or ancient translation. Now, why would that be true? It is not the function of the doctrine of inspiration to deal with the issue of the transmission of the text. The doctrine of preservation is the doctrine that does that.

In the next lesson, we will begin to discuss the doctrine of preservation. You will see that the doctrine of preservation is intricately joined to inspiration. Inspiration and preservation are intermeshed in such a way that you cannot have one without the other.

But, we have been dealing with inspiration – the scripture came out of the mouth of God, God breathed them, he speaks them out, and the scripture comes right out of his mouth. That issue is not the issue that we are discussing when we are talking about whether we have the inspired word of God in our hand today. The idea of the transmission of the text, and where the bible is today, is the doctrine of preservation.

The reason I point that out to you is this. People say, “Are you trying to say that the King James Bible is the inspired word of God?” They will try to make fun of you if you believe that the Authorized Version, or Lucar’s German Receptus, etc., are copies of the inspired word of God. They say, “Do you mean that the translators were inspired like the original writers were?” And the answer is “no”. We are not describing that.

I have learned this. You must be very careful in your statement of what you are trying to say because people have all kinds of false concepts. People jump to all kinds of conclusions about what they think they heard you say. You want to say it in the most proper, and clear, and persuasive fashion. You want to distinguish between inspiration and preservation. What you hold in your hand is the preserved word of God. Inspiration deals with the written text of the scripture. Inspiration deals with what God wrote down, not the process but the result. It deals with what he wrote down on the page. The words are inspired.

Now, what happened to those inspired words is determined by the doctrine of preservation. If you have a consistent doctrine of preservation, (what God wrote down he has preserved through history and therefore you can hold it in your hands today), then you can say that you hold the preserved word. You have a copy of the original.

Therefore, if you have the preserved word of God, you have an inspired bible. But, inspiration means that the original copies came out of the mouth of God. Preservation is what gets it to you.

So, the doctrine of inspiration does not guarantee the inspiration of any particular modern or ancient translation. Preservation does that. Are you following the distinction that I am trying to make there?

When I first came to the Chicago area, I ran into some tremendous problems with people as I was trying to communicate the issues of preservation to them.

I have never told anybody that I believed that the King James translators were inspired. In fact, I do not believe that. I believe that they were providentially guided to preserve the word of God and that the doctrine involved is preservation.

Inspiration ceased when the canon of scripture was completed. There is no inspiration today, but there is providential preservation.

Number three – Inspiration does not allow for any false information, but it does on occasion record the lie of someone.

Just because something is recorded in the bible that does not mean it is always the truth. It is always an accurate record of what went on; but if somebody lies to somebody else, the record of the lie is accurate, but the lie is still a lie.

Turn to Genesis 3 and I will show you what I am talking about. Verse 4 says, “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.” That is an accurate record of what Satan said, but you have to be careful to distinguish between what God records and what he sanctions. Genesis 3:4 is not true; it is a lie.

If I tell you that verse 4 is a lie, am I saying the text is wrong, or that the man who said it is wrong? I am saying that the man who said it is wrong. If I tell you that verse 4 is true, what am I saying? Am I saying that the devil did not tell a lie? No, I am saying that it is an accurate record of what Satan said. You must be real careful to distinguish between those things.

Turn to Job 42 and I will show you another example. Verse 7 says, “”And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is right*, as my servant Job *hath*.” Well wait a minute! All of that stuff is recorded in the book of Job, and God says that it is not right. It is false information; it is bad information. It is off the center, meaning it is not accurate. But, God is not impugning the inspiration of the book of Job. He is not saying that the book of Job is not an accurate record. God is saying that it was accurately recorded, but what they said is not accurate.

You want to remember this. Inspiration does not allow for any false information. Everything that is recorded is true and accurate in its record, but that does not mean that God did not record someone's lie or some misinformation that someone put out.

(I am giving you these things in numerical order because they are tremendously diverse things. These are just sort of loose ends that I am trying to gather up for you in this lesson. I want you to be able to hang on to them.)

Number Four – Inspiration does not mean that all bible writers had personal illumination. I spoke to you about personal illumination before. Do you remember the four things? Revelation proceeds inspiration and then you have illumination and preservation. In order to have inspiration, you must have revelation. God has to speak to his word. With inspiration, the word is taken from God and put down on the paper. Illumination is taken from the paper and understanding is given to the man. Preservation is when the word is transferred from one generation to the next.

Now, every bible writer did not have personal illumination about all that he was writing down. That is one of the reasons you know that the bible had to come out of God's mouth.

The dynamic inspiration idea is that it goes into the mind of man, and he comprehends it, and he spits it out. Consequently, that would mean there is no way to transfer the thought if it was incomprehensible to the man.

1 Peter 1:10,11 is very clear that all of the writers do not have personal illumination. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Obviously, the men (the prophets in time past) that wrote down in that Old Testament searched their own writings diligently. They were trying to figure out what the Spirit meant when he wrote these things through them about the sufferings of Christ and the glory to come. It is pretty obvious – they did not all have personal illumination at all times.

Turn back to Daniel and I will give you another illustration. Prophetic passages, especially, seem to go "over the head" of the writer at times. Daniel 7:1 – "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the matters." He proceeds to record the dream in the words that follow.

Now look at Daniel 7:28 – "Hitherto *is* the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations (*I like that – the cogitations of my head upon my bed*) much troubled me, (*they baffled me; I did not understand them*), and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart." Daniel did not grasp what was going on. He writes the dream down in verses 1-28, but he does not fully understand what is happening.

This even happens in verse 15 – "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me." He could not understand them. Verses 16 and 17 – "I

came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, *are* four kings, *which* shall arise out of the earth.” He gives the interpretation and explains to him what he is talking about, and Daniel still does not understand it.

If you ever get the interpretation all laid out and you still do not understand, just remember Daniel. He had the facts but he did not have the illumination to understand the facts, and that is not unusual. He writes 27 verses there, and in half of them he is just writing the dream down, and in the other half of them, you have the explanation that was given him. Yet, he still does not understand it.

In Daniel 8, he gets another vision. Daniel 8:1 – “In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, *even unto me Daniel, ...*” Then he writes the vision down. Verse 27 – “And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain days; (Imagine getting a vision that was so heavy that it just made you sick, so weak that you just could not stand up under it)*, afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood *it.*” He said, “I got something, but I cannot grasp it; I cannot understand it.”

Daniel 8:15,16 – “And it came to pass, when I, *even I Daniel*, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between *the banks of Ulai*, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision.” Gabriel comes down and explains it to Daniel, but he still cannot understand it.

He even interprets it for him in verses 20 and 21 – “The ram which thou sawest having *two horns are* the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat *is* the king of Grecia: and the great horn that *is* between his eyes *is* the first king.” He even tells them who the next two kingdoms are going to be, but Daniel still does not get it. That should not be too difficult for you to understand; because if I came along and told you what was going to happen in the next 100 years in the continent of the United States, you probably would not understand it all either.

I am just trying to get you to understand that just because the bible writer wrote it, that does not necessarily mean that he understood everything that he wrote down. That is very important for you to understand in the issue of progressive revelation. Something can be written down in time past and not understood by the men that wrote it down. Yet, it is inspired, and it is right.

Number Five – Inspiration does not prohibit personal research by a writer. That is very important because a lot of people will try to get after you about the issues of inspiration. They will claim that you are saying that the man who wrote it had to sit on a stump somewhere knowing nothing, and God just bore a hole in his head and poured the information in. That is not what is implied by inspiration. Inspiration does not imply that God does not take into account the activities, and the knowledge, and the frame of reference of the man who wrote it. Nor does it imply that when you read about someone in the scripture who has personally investigated things, that therefore God could not have inspired him because the man was not in a trance and all that kind of stuff.

I have never read about anybody, or heard about anybody that teaches plenary verbal inspiration and believes that the men were put into a trance, or a vision, or whatever in order to write the text of the scripture. If you ever hear anybody say that, please know that they are wrong. God did not just blank-out their mind and pick up their pen in a magical kind of operation and cause them to write. He reached into the library of their vocabulary; and out of that he chose words and moved upon them in such a way that the words they wrote down were the very words that he wanted them to write down. The words came out of his mouth through them onto the paper.

Now, that does not imply that he did not use their faculties, their understanding, their capabilities, and even their vocabularies.

Peter was man who used bad grammar. He was a fisherman. (Have you ever met commercial fishermen? They usually do have pretty bad grammar.) When you find Peter speaking in the book of Acts, he uses bad grammar every now and then. That drives people up a wall, especially people that study grammar.

On the other hand, Paul was a very educated man. He was a rabbi, and he used wonderfully perfect grammar.

So, God did not correct a man's grammar. Can't God use Peter's bad grammar?

Turn to Luke 1 and notice that Luke claims to have done personal research in order to write his gospel. Luke 1:1,2 – "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word." The apostles were the "eyewitnesses and ministers."

Verses 3 and 4 – "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed." Luke is saying, "Listen Theophilus, I am writing this to you, and I want you to know at the outset that I have been a good historian. I checked the references; I talked to the eyewitness accounts; I talked to the people that were there – the people that know. When I got this piece of information, I checked it out."

It is amazing how many historical references there are in the book of Luke. As you read Luke sometime, mark down the dates, and the references, and that kind of thing, and you will be impressed with the job that Luke did.

My point to you is that Luke personally researched the data, and he said, "I've checked all the facts that you are going to read in this book." Yet, the book of Luke is inspired by God.

Thus, inspiration does not mean that the writer is prohibited from doing personal research. That might not mean much to you now; but when you get out in the ministry, you will find that a lot of people object to that. People will use that against you.

Number Six – Inspiration does not deny the use of extra-biblical sources. I say it that way because I cannot come up with any better way to communicate what I have in my mind.

Let me show you some extra-biblical statements. When Luke wrote Acts 17:28, he wrote it down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that is an inspired passage. He wrote it down under the control of the Holy Spirit. But notice what it says. Paul is talking – “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.” That does not mean that God Almighty put those words in the poets mouth, but it does mean that God Almighty accurately recorded them here. If you look back in history books, you can find the source.

In the compilation of books in your Old Testament, it is quite obvious that much data was taken from public records. In fact, there are whole chapters in the book of Daniel that are records of public decrees.

1 Chronicles 29:29 – “Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.” The term “seer” and “prophet” are the same term.

Write 1 Samuel 9:9 next to 1 Chronicles 29:29 in our bible. In

1 Samuel 9:9 you will read that the term “seer” is a term that was used for the prophet before they began to use the term “prophet.”

When he says, “the book of Samuel the seer, and the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer” that demonstrates that the nation Israel had extensive archives of public records. What is written in Chronicles is easily checkable; it is easy to verify the information. It is taken from well-known public records that only prove the bonafide nature of the work that you are reading in Chronicles as being that of a well-informed author.

There are at least 14 different source references recorded in 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles.

2 Chronicles 9:29 – “Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, *are* they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?”

2 Chronicles 12:15 – “Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, *are* they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? *And there were* wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.” They are public records that they can go read and check what is being written down in the scripture.

2 Chronicles 13:22 – “And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, *are* written in the story of the prophet Iddo.”

2 Chronicles 20:34 – “Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, who *is* mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.”

Do you see the historic references when you read these things?

Inspiration does not allow for any false information. It does not necessarily mean that God, on occasion, does not record something that was not originally inspired. He takes it and puts it in the bible; and the part that is in the bible is inspired, because it is what is written down in this book. If God can record Satan’s lie, he can record public records.

Paul says in Titus 1:12 – “One of themselves, *even* a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians *are* always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.”

Well, the value of these things that you are reading in Chronicles is not to question inspiration. That is what some people use it for; they conclude that the word of God is not inspired because of these things. But, it demonstrates that the nation Israel had extensive archives of public records. They had a public library system; they had historical records.

When the author wrote these things down, he is just basically doing what we do when we give footnotes. He is saying, “Go check it in this record or that record.” And those folks could go check it and find it in the public records. You better not tell someone that they can go check it if it is not there. It is giving you the understanding that the man who wrote and compiled the information in Chronicles was a well-informed man using easily verifiable information readily accessible to the public.

I hope you do not have the idea that Israel’s past was one of dim darkness with nobody writing anything or understanding anything.

Allow me to just give you the rest of the references: 2 Chronicles 24:27, 26:22, 27:7, and 32:32. Those references demonstrate that inspiration does not deny the use of extra-biblical sources. They show you that Israel had extensive archives and that the guys that compiled this information back there had it readily available to them. The public also had it readily available to them, and they are referring people to the records.

Turn to Proverbs and notice the same phenomena. Proverbs 25:1 – “These *are* also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.” Hezekiah’s men copied these things down. Hezekiah probably compiled the book itself.

Proverbs 30:1 – “The words of Agur (*that name means “I shall fear”*) the son of Jakeh, *even* the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal.” Then you have the words of Agur.

Proverbs 31:1 – “The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.” The name “Lemuel” means “to God, to El, Elohim”, and that is a name for Solomon. Proverbs 31 contains the words that Bathseba taught Solomon about the qualifications of a good wife.

All of this stuff is compiled together. I am trying to say that inspiration does not mean that scripture is no longer inspired when they include these public records. It is inspired because it is part of God's word.

When you read passages like that, you do not have to be concerned about them.

Number Seven – Inspiration does not overwhelm the personality of the human author. You need to remember that! Inspiration does not mean that a guy just goes into a catatonic state while the Lord gives him the words. But, some people will try to make you believe that about inspiration.

I have told you that God dictated the words onto the page in inspiration.

When I went to school, that was called “mechanical dictation”. Some people say that verbal inspiration just makes the writers glorified stenographers, but that is just the slander of modernists.

I have an article that I have had in my files since 1965 entitled “Verbal Inspiration or Mechanical Inspiration?” It was published May 1, 1965 in the Baptist Vision. Evangelist John R Rice wrote it.

Dr. Rice is a Baptist with a big “B”. Back in the old days he had a real heart for the Modernist/Fundamentalist debate. He was one of those old men that fought about it years ago like Mr. O'Hare did and like Mr. Stam did many years ago. In the late 60s, Dr. Rice was battling with the new evangelicals and Billy Graham. He was one of the foremost people who went to battle with Graham early for his modernist associations.

In this article, Dr. Rice is writing in reply to an article written by the president of Wheaton College back in those days. Rice said this, “Why use the false term of modernism, mechanical dictation, to derive fundamentalists?”

The term “mechanical dictation” is a term that was invented by the modernists to ridicule verbal inspiration.

When you hear someone say that they believe in verbal inspiration, they are saying that they believe in dictation of the scripture. Verbal inspiration and dictation of the scripture are the same thing.

The word “dictated” regarding inspiration of the scripture is offensive to the modernist, but the word “dictated” actually and literally means the same as “verbal”. Dictate is from the Latin “dictatus” the past part of “dictare”. It comes from “dicere”, which means, “to say” in Latin. “To dictate” means, “to say something.” (That is the definition of the Webster's New International Unabridged Dictionary.)

Now, did God say the things written down in the bible? Doesn't the bible consist of every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God? Then, God dictated them. You do not have to be afraid of that word.

I recommend that you read a book called The Divine Inspiration of the Bible. This book is a classic on the subject of inspiration. A Frenchman, Louis Gaussen, wrote it. This book was translated into English, and it has just been republished by Kregel Publications. I bought this book last week when I was in Denver. I read this book when I was just a young fellow. It was in my Uncle's library in Mobile, Alabama. It was out of print and you could not get it, but Kregel re-printed the book in their classic re-prints. This is a classic defense of inspiration.

I wish that I had this book when we started this Manuscript Evidence class, because this would have been our textbook for this class up to this point. If you run across a copy of this book, it would be well worth having in your library.

Anyway, Gaussen used the term "dictated" in reference to the scripture. But, my point to you is that the term "mechanical dictation" is a term invented by modernists to refer to verbal inspiration and the infallible accuracy of the bible. Men that believe in dynamic inspiration, and all of those other types of inspiration that we went over earlier, invented the term "mechanical dictation" in order to ridicule the idea that God selected the words.

Getting back to the article, Rice says that he does not know of anyone who teaches and believes in verbal inspiration that has ever taught what the modernists describe as mechanical dictation.

I am trying to alert you to the fact that you will hear the term "mechanical dictation". That is a term that the modernists use. It will sadden you to think that men who actually believe in verbal inspiration will recoil at the term "mechanical dictation" and that they are a little shy about it. Folks, that is exactly what the modernists want you to do. They want you to back off of plenary verbal inspiration so they give it an unkind-sounding name, and they respond to that straw dummy that they set up.

So, when someone says to you, "Well, that's mechanical dictation", you just say, "That's a slander of the modernists, and I will not put up with it."

I have a letter on my desk from a good fundamental, bible-believing, verbal-inspiration man, and he said, "But, you are teaching mechanical dictation." He wrote me a whole list of things about how inspiration does not overwhelm the personality of the author. He has fallen under the beguilement and the slander of the modernists against the doctrine of verbal inspiration.

Modernists use the term "mechanical dictation" to describe "verbal inspiration." Mechanical inspiration means a man went into a coma, and God picked the person up and used his hand in a mechanical sense rather than using the man's personality and using his thoughts and so forth. The man just went into a trance. (I am defining the modernist's view of mechanical dictation. It is their term. It is not our term.)

Dictation is a good word; it means, “to say”. When Jesus quotes Deuteronomy and says, “Every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” that is dictation.

I gave you a definition for inspiration when we started knowing that I would get to this point. God dictated the words. The word “dictate” simply means, “to say.”

The modernists use the word dictate, and Calvin used the word dictate, and the church fathers used the word dictate. Nobody has been afraid of the word dictate until the modernists come along and changed it to the term “mechanical dictation”. They use that term to try to slander people who believe in verbal inspiration – that God inspired the words.

I gave you the different types of inspiration, and the modernists believe the other types, not plenary verbal inspiration. They believe that the thought and the concept are the issue and those kinds of things.

But, the writers of the bible were not in trances and comas. Luke goes out and researches the thing. When they compile the book of Chronicles, they get it out of the public records, and they put it together. The book of Genesis is the same way.

Inspiration is God dictating his word through the personality and instrumentality of the man so that what is written on the page are the very words that God determined would be written down.

(Look at the definition of inspiration that I gave you to start with and learn that definition. I wrote that definition out with all of these things in mind, and you will see how it all fits together.)

Please remember that mechanical dictation is a slanderous ridicule of the modernist. Do not let people pull that on you in the future.

Inspiration is what is written on the page. It does not mean that the author did not gain the information that God gleamed out of his mind from other places. God reached into the library of the writer’s vocabulary and brought out the very words that God intended the man to say. Sometimes the man had them there already from different sources, but sometimes the man, like Daniel, did not know where they came from or what they meant even after he wrote them down. Sometimes they understood and sometimes they did not.

Most information in the bible was commonly known – oral tradition at the time, preaching and teaching at the time. The book of Luke was that way. He said, “A lot of people have been trying to write this stuff down in order, and I went and got the information and here it is.” Yet, it turns out to be what God was doing.

There are things in the book of Luke that he could not necessarily have gotten by eyewitness accounts. When it says that Jesus sweat great drops of blood and the angels ministered to him, you have to remember that everybody there was asleep except Christ. It would have had to be reported by Christ to them, which is not very likely, but it may have happened that way. Or, he got that information directly from God.

Number Eight- Inspiration does not mean uniformity in all the details given in describing the same event. An example of that are the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. You have four inspired accounts of the earthly ministry of Christ each given from a different perspective.

We will get around to studying Old Testament Survey, and you will see that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all give a different perspective of Christ. Matthew presents him as King; Mark presents him as a servant; Luke presents him as the Son of man; and John presents him as God. They each give their personal perspective, their individual perspective, and it demonstrates design and purpose. Yet, each one of the books will give you different details.

So, inspiration does not mean that all of the details are the same, rather, it shows the design and purpose in giving a particular viewpoint, which might necessitate different details.

B – Plenary Verbal Inspiration assures us that God included all of the necessary things that he wanted us to know and excluded everything else.

In other words, everything that you need is in the bible and what is not in the bible, you do not need. That is pretty simple. If God wrote the very words down, then you can be sure and confident that everything that he wanted written down is there and that everything that is excluded is unnecessary. You are not left just to trust the human authors. A verse on that is 2 Timothy 3:17 – “That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

The only other books you need are tools to study the bible, and the bible is the authority and the standard. You might need a dictionary to help you to understand the words, or a book on grammar to learn how to read the bible. You may want to study other teachers, so you would use other commentaries and bible study books. But, you are not studying the commentaries and the grammar books and the lexicons; you are studying the bible. The bible is all you need.

I heard a fellow preaching on the television the other day and he said, “If I was marooned on a desert island, the only book that I would want is this.” And he lifted up a commentary for everyone to see. I thought *the poor fellow*. He was trying to sell that commentary, and he was just trying to brag on it. I do not think he really meant what he said.

The only book you really need is the bible; and if you will spend enough time studying the bible, you will not need the other ones to help you study it.

C – Inspiration has been completed.

Colossians 1:25 – “Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (*to complete*) the word of God.” The word of God has been completed in its contents, in its subjects, and in its canon.

There is no more revelation being given today. Revelation has been completed. Revelation produces inspiration. Illumination produces preservation. Revelation is completed; inspiration is completed. They do not function today.

The Charismatic movement teaches that God is revealing himself today – Jesus shows up and speaks to people, and they are speaking in tongues and telling you what God is saying. They profess to believe in a continuing revelation, which means that there is a continuing inspiration, meaning that the word of God is not completed. It is being added to every time they speak and every time they preach. That is a dangerous doctrine! The reason it is so dangerous is because that would mean that your bible is not complete, therefore, it is not the last word, and it is not completely and absolutely authoritative. (That is Satan’s design – to cause you not to believe that it is complete and absolutely authoritative.)

When you believe as the Charismatics, (that revelation and inspiration are not finished), you get into Joseph Smith, and Mary Baker Eddy, and Charles Russell, and Herbert Armstrong and all the rest of them. They believe that the bible is not complete, and they are getting revelations. They believe that what they write are of equal inspiration and authority of your bible text.

When people believe that way, they come up with the lost books of the bible, and the fact that there should be another chapter in the book of Acts, and those kinds of things.

D – The bible is complete.

Revelation and inspiration are completed. God has completed it, and it is finished. Illumination, which is the understanding and enlightenment of the word, is continuing. The teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit is illumination. Illumination produces preservation – identifying where God’s words are. Paul says in Colossians 1:25 that the scripture is completed as to its content – its subject matter.

The writing of the scripture is complete, which means if verbal inspiration assures you that God included everything that is necessary, all that he wanted you to have in the bible, then the bible is complete. If you add those two things together, you come up with the fact that the canon is complete without any Apocrapha or any extra books.

Therefore, the scripture is infallible; it is authoritative; it is sufficient; it is effective.

In Colossians 1:25, Paul is saying that the dispensation of the grace of God is given to me to fulfil the word of God – to bring the word of God to its completion. Without Paul’s revelation, the word of God would never be complete in its subject matter. Paul writes his epistles, and then Paul is gone. John and the other men write the books that they wrote, and then John writes the last book of the Revelation; and he says, “Now, do not add anything to this and do not take anything away from it.” So, the prophetic program is also complete.

MSS 101 – 7
(Test)

On a separate sheet of properly headed paper, please answer the following questions. Remember to use complete sentences when appropriate.

1. According to 2 Timothy 2:2, what is the measure of a successful ministry?
2. What passage outlines Paul's pattern for the edification of the believer?
3. What two issues are involved in the first step?
4. How would you describe what Paul means by the second step?
5. Since all of God's word is for us, therefore, it logically follows that it is all about us. True or False?
6. How is Paul's pattern for the believer's edification reflected in the canonical order of his epistles? How can 2 Timothy 3:16 be used to show this spiritual arrangement?
7. "Manuscript Evidence" is a study of both the origin and the transmission of the written word of God. True or False?
8. Genesis 3:1-6 records five classic attacks on the word of God. List three.
9. What is Satan's policy of evil against God's word designed to destroy?
10. Give five illustrations (with support verses) that demonstrate the close connection between the written word of God and the living word of God.
11. What is the meaning of the term "revelation"?
12. Revelation → _____ . (Fill in the blank)
13. _____ → Preservation. (Fill in the blank)
14. Define what the bible means by "inspiration".
15. There are many theories of inspiration. Which one is correct? Is this view totally adequate? Why?
16. What is the basic issue in inspiration? Write out the text that states this basic issue.
17. What is God's design and purpose in inspiration? Give three passages to illustrate this design.

18. How did the New Testament writers view the other New Testament writers?
Give two proof texts.
19. How did Jesus Christ view the scripture? Give three proof texts.
20. If the bible is inspired, how do you explain the presence of statements that are untrue? For example, Satan's statement to Eve: "thou shalt not surely die."
21. Did each bible writer have a personal understanding of what he wrote?
Give scripture please.
22. Inspiration does away with all personal research done by the writer. True or False? Give scripture please.
23. Inspiration does not deny the use of extra-biblical sources. True or False?
Please give proof text.
24. Because the bible is inspired, there is perfect uniformity and agreement in all the details given in describing the same event. True or False?
25. The doctrine of inspiration alone does not assure us that God included in the bible all the necessary things he wanted us to know and excluded everything else. True or False?

Please write the following verses:

Romans 10:17

Romans 16:25-26

1 Corinthians 2:13

John 12:48

MSS 101 – 8

We will have a transition period in this lesson; and then in the next lesson, we will have an earnest study of the subject of preservation. God did not just write his bible, but he also preserved his bible.

We studied the doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration. Plenary verbal inspiration is the terminology that is used to describe the fact that God breathed, or God spoke his word – the fact that scripture came right out of the mouth of God. The very words and the forms of the words that are in the scripture are what God said. In other words, whatever scripture says, God said. Plenary verbal inspiration means that all of the words came from God, and that assures us that God has included everything that is necessary for us to know. Everything that God wants us to know has been included in the scripture, and everything else has been left out. What is not there, you do not need; and what is there, is bible for you.

When we started this Manuscript Evidence class, I put a little diagram on the board, and it started with revelation. Revelation has to do with the content of what God communicates. The word “revelation” means “to unveil”. It is what God communicates to man. It goes from God to man. Without that act of God communicating the information about himself to man, man would be in darkness.

Revelation produces inspiration. The reason that inspiration can exist is because you have the message that goes from God to man; and when it goes from God to man, man takes it and puts it down on paper.

(One kind of revelation produces spoken words, but we are studying the issue of inspiration.)

Without revelation, inspiration is not possible. However, this process whereby revelation and inspiration are taking place has come to an end. Revelation and inspiration took place over a period of about 1500 years, but they have been completed.

Now that the bible has been completely written, the process of revelation is over with. There is no more revelation today.

Today, we have illumination. Illumination has to do with taking what has been written down and giving man the understanding of it. That is the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit where he takes it from the page where it is written and puts it within the heart and the soul of the man.

Because of that process of the Holy Spirit’s teaching ministry (illumination), we have what is called preservation – the moving of the truth that God revealed and man wrote down is put in the heart of men, and there is a capacity to preserve that inspiration through history.

Revelation and Illumination have to do with the communication to the man. Inspiration and preservation have to do with what is written down on the page.

When we start studying preservation, you will see the importance of illumination.

Revelation and inspiration have ceased. Revelation has been completed. It is an issue that is finished, and it is not something that is constantly being added to today.

We looked at a few passages in the last lesson. In Colossians 1, the apostle Paul talks about the dispensation of the grace of God that is given to him. Colossians 1:25 – “Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God.” Paul is given the revelation of the mystery, and the information that is given to Paul about the mystery is a full unit. When that is given, then the word of God is completed.

In the book of Revelation, John gets the last word of the prophetic program and then that is completed. Now the information in the prophetic program has all been revealed, and the mystery program has all been revealed. Revelation is complete, therefore, inspiration is also complete. It is a completed process.

I want you to understand some things about the completion of your bible. Revelation and inspiration are at one level and that level is completed. But illumination and preservation is at another level, and it is a continuous process. They continue through time, and they continue right now. With regard to the word of God, the Holy Spirit illuminates it and teaches it to the believer. The believer with that illuminated mind preserves the word of God through history from generation to generation. This is still a function. It is active today.

I want you to remember three real important things. I want you to notice these three things in regard to your bible being complete.

Number One – The Old Testament canon was fixed at the time of Christ.

The word “canon” means “the books that make up your bible”. When you read about the canon of scripture, the canon is referring to the books that make up the contents of your bible.

(In a later lesson, we will talk about canonicity – how you determine what is in the bible and what is not in the bible, what should be kept in the bible and what should be kept out of the bible.)

The Old Testament canon was fixed and established at the time Christ, and he recognized and identified what it is.

Luke 24:44,45 – “And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.” When he talks about the law, in the prophets, in the psalms, he is talking about the scripture. The law, the prophets, and the psalms are the threefold divisions of a Hebrew bible.

A Hebrew bible is divided into three sections – the law, which is called the Torah, the prophets, which is called the Nabhim, and then the writings, which is called the Kethubhim.

I want to give you a list of the books that make up a Jewish bible. There are 24 books in a Jewish bible. First, there is the Torah, the law. The Torah consists of the 5 books of Moses (Genesis to Deuteronomy).

The second division is the prophets, the Nabhim (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and The Twelve). The book titled “The Twelve” is the twelve Minor Prophets (Hosea through Malachi). Those twelve Minor Prophets are all included in one book in the Jewish bible.

You can see why the number of books in the Jewish bible will be different from our bible. We have 39 books in our Old Testament. The 39 books in our Old Testament are exactly the same books as in a Hebrew bible. The Jewish bible has a fewer number of books. We have 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel, but the Jewish bible has one book called Samuel. We have 1 Kings and 2 Kings, but the Jewish bible has one book called Kings. That is four books reduced to two books right there. Then you have “The Twelve” and that is twelve books reduced to one. The number is different when you compare the Hebrew bible to our Old Testament, but they contain the exact same books.

The third division is “the writings” and that word is spelled “Kethubhim”.

I do not expect you to need these words, (Torah, Nabhim, Kethubhim). When you are in the pulpit, you will not refer to the Kethubhim, because nobody will understand what you are talking about. However, sometimes you will read these words in books; and you will not be able to go to a dictionary to find out what that word means, which is why I am telling you now.

Now, in the Kethubhim, the first book is the book of Psalm. Then it contains Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles.

The Jewish bible has those 24 books in it, and I just gave you the order of the books. They are exactly the same books as the 39 in our Old Testament, but because of the combining of some of the books into one book, there is a numerical difference.

Notice that Christ says, the law (Genesis to Deuteronomy), the prophets (Joshua to The Twelve), and the psalm. You have that threefold division. Psalm stands at the head of that third class. Oftentimes you will read that third class described the psalm, (the writings), because that one big book stands at its head.

Notice that the Apocrapha is not included. There are 14 books in the Old Testament of the Roman Catholic Bible that you do not have in your bible. The Council of Trent in 1545 put an anathema, an official curse, on anybody that did not believe that these books were Holy Scripture. So if you do not believe the Apocrapha is Holy Scripture, (just like Jesus did not), you are in trouble. You are in trouble if you are afraid of Rome.

The word “Apocrapha” means “hidden or secret”. Jerome gave the books that name because they were the secret or hidden books. The books contained in the Apocrapha are 1 Esdra, 2 Esdra, Tobit, Judith, Additions to the Book of Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (also known as “The Wisdom of Sirach”), Baruch, Song of Suzanna, Song of the Three Children, The Story of Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasseh, 1 Maccabees, and 2 Maccabees.

1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees are very valuable historical books that give accounts of the history of Israel between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament. So, you will see those books quoted sometimes in literature.

The rest of those books are just considered pseudepigrapha, which means “false writings”.

When the Council of Trent put an anathema on anyone that did not believe that these books were part of the Holy Scripture, they anathematize Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ said that the Hebrew Bible contains the law, the prophets, and the psalm. Those Apocrapha books are not found in any copy that has ever existed in any Hebrew Bible, and no Jew would accept those as scripture.

Jesus makes two canonical statements: Luke 24:44 and Luke 11:51.

Look at Luke 11:50,51 – “That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.” Jesus is saying, “That blood will be required from Abel to Zacharias.” Abel is in the book of Genesis, and Zacharias gets slain between the temple and the altar in the book of 2 Chronicles.

In 2 Chronicles Jehoiada, a tremendous priest in Israel, dies. When he dies, the kingdom begins to go back into idolatry. 2 Chronicles 24:20,21 – “And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD.” Jesus said, “between the temple and the altar”, and that territory would be the court.

2 Chronicles 24:22 – “Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon *it*, and require *it*.” Jesus says that the blood will be required from Genesis to 2 Chronicles.

If I were to say that I believe the book from Genesis to Revelation, what would I be saying? I would be saying that we believe the book from the beginning to the end.

The book of Chronicles is the last book in the Jewish Bible. Jesus is saying, “From the beginning to the end.” Jesus is identifying what marks out the demarcation of a bible. He said that it starts in Genesis, and it goes through 2 Chronicles. That is the order that I gave you from the Hebrew Bible in those three parts – Genesis through 2 Chronicles.

It is important that you understand those statements made by Jesus Christ (Jesus Christ's attitude about the bible) – that the canon and the content of the Old Testament was fixed at the time of Christ.

Therefore, the attempts to add the Apocrapha to the bible are attempts that go against the clear teaching and understanding of Christ during his earthly ministry.

Thus, we accept the Old Testament as complete.

Number Two – Revelation has ceased. There is no more inspiration because revelation has ceased.

Inspiration is based on revelation; it is based on the fact that God gives his word. If God is not giving any more of his word, or any more revelation, then there is nothing for man to write down as coming from God directly.

I want you to notice some things. We have looked at these passages before, but I want to remind you of them again.

Exodus 4:12 – “Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.” God is talking to Moses. He says, “Moses you are going to be my spokesman, and I will be with your mouth, and I will teach you what to say. I am going to put my words in your mouth so you say what I want you to say.”

Moses argues about it, so God tells him about Aaron. Exodus 4:15 – And thou shalt speak unto him (Aaron), and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.” In other words, God says, “Okay Moses, if you cannot get out there because you are slow of speech, you make Aaron your spokesman; and I will put my words in your mouth, then you take them and put them in Aaron's mouth, and Aaron can go speak the words.”

In Exodus 7:1, Aaron is called Moses' prophet. “AND the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.” A prophet is a man who is your spokesman; you put your words in his mouth.

The issue in revelation is the fact that God is going to put his words in some people's mouths.

We looked at these passages when we studied inspiration. It has to do with God putting his word in the mouth of these people.

2 Samuel 23:2 – “The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” There is no doubt about what is going on.

Ezekiel 2:1-5 – “AND he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children

of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, *even* unto this very day. For *they are* impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus said the Lord GOD. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they *are* a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.”

God says, “I am going to speak to them, but I will use you to speak; and you say , “Thus saith the LORD,” and they will know that God has been talking to them.

Now, I want to explain the reason that I brought that to your attention. I want you to notice something very significant about this issue of revelation and the fact that you know revelation has ceased.

In Matthew 10, the Lord Jesus Christ is equipping and preparing his apostles for their ministry. In verses 19 and 20 he says, “But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” In other words, the Spirit of God is going to speak in these people just like David indicated in 2 Samuel 23.

These people are going to be God’s spokesmen. The issue of prophetic revelation is happening to these people, just like the prophets in the Old Testament.

This is fulfilled in the apostles on the day of Pentecost and subsequent to Pentecost.

Luke 21:14,15 – “Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.”

God told these people the same thing that he told Moses, “I will give you a mouth.”

The issue of prophecy, and revelation, and prophetic utterance is exactly what is being dealt with in these passages.

You must understand that when these people are speaking in tongues and prophesying in the New Testament, it is not like what you see going on today. These people are actually communicating the very word of God in the same way and in the same process whereby men wrote the bible. They are receiving revelation, which in the case of the scripture, it is written down (that is inspiration). Inspiration is based on the revelation, and if revelation is being given, then it is possible for inspiration to be given. What the prophets did in the Old Testament, (what happened to Moses and so forth in order to produce the books of Moses), is happening in Acts 2. It is exactly the same phenomena of revelation.

Now you will see the fulfillment. Acts 2:1-4 – “AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they

were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Notice the word “speak”.

In 2 Peter 1:21, the last half of the verse says, “but holy men of God spake as *they were moved* by the Holy Ghost.” That word “spake” is the same as in Acts 2 when they “speak”.

When it says that they were moved with the Holy Ghost, that Greek word is exactly the same word in Acts 2:2 where it says “a rushing mighty wind”.

A phenomena is happening in Acts 2, and it is comparable to the process whereby inspiration is produced in 2 Peter 1.

In Acts 4:23 to Acts 5:11, you see Pentecost repeated. Acts 4:31 – “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”

If you compare Acts 2:4 with Acts 4:31, you will see that they are identical passages, the same events. Acts 4:31 is a repeat of Acts 2:4.

I am trying to give you the idea that, as the Spirit of God gave them utterance, they began to speak God’s word. They are prophesying; they are adding revelation from God; they are giving communication from God that people do not have at that time. They are speaking for God, and the revelation is coming from the Holy Spirit just as it did with the prophets in the Old Testament – it speaks out through them.

In 1 Corinthians 12:13,14, Paul deals with the issue of prophecy and tongues. I want you to understand that prophecy and tongues have to do with being the mouthpiece of God, just like Ezekiel and Moses and David. These people in the New Testament have that same phenomena happening to them that those men in the Old Testament had when they were writing down the Old Testament scripture.

Do you remember when we studied inspiration and I told you that inspiration has to do with the words written on the page, that there is a process whereby that written page is produced?

That process is in

2 Peter 1:21 where the holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. The process that produces inspiration is what is taking place in the prophecy and in the “tongue speaking” in Acts 2, and Acts 4, and

1 Corinthians 14. It is the same process that produces and results in inspiration.

1 Corinthians 13:8 – “Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies (that is the gift of prophecy) they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues (the gift of tongues) they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge (the gift of knowledge) it shall vanish away.” (All of these gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12.)

Paul is saying that there will come a time when this mouthpiece of God, these gifts that are used by God to make known his word, will no longer be used.

When does that time come? 1 Corinthians 13:9 – “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.”

There is a contrast – now some things are true and then some things will be true. He says that the gifts are in effect now. But, there will come a time when the gifts will be done away with; they will cease.

NOW	→	THEN
Gifts		Done away with
Gift of Knowledge		Done away with
Gift of Prophecy		Done away with

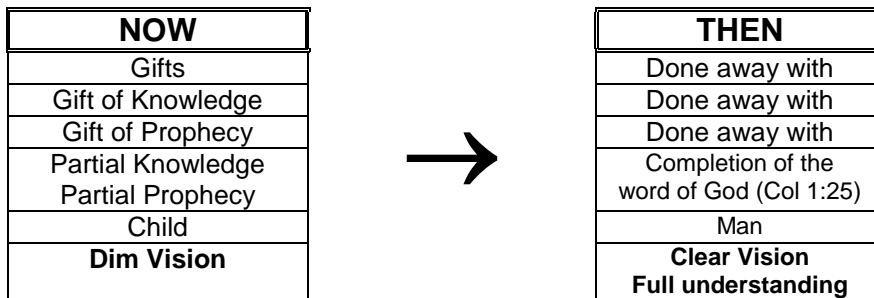
1 Corinthians 13:10 – “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” The partial will be done away with one day. What is in part? Partial knowledge, and partial prophecy, will done away with. Well, what will come that will do away with partial knowledge? Perfect knowledge will come, which is full understanding. “That which is perfect” is the completion of the revelation. That is why Paul says in Colossians 1:25 that the word of God is given to him to fulfil, to complete, the word of God, to bring it to the point of perfection, to bring it to its full end.

NOW	→	THEN
Gifts		Done away with
Gift of Knowledge		Done away with
Gift of Prophecy		Done away with
Partial Knowledge		Completion of the
Partial Prophecy		word of God (Col 1:25)

Notice the illustration in 1 Corinthians 13:11 – “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” When I came to maturity, (perfection), I put away the childish things.

NOW	→	THEN
Gifts		Done away with
Gift of Knowledge		Done away with
Gift of Prophecy		Done away with
Partial Knowledge		Completion of the
Partial Prophecy		word of God (Col 1:25)
Child		Man

Verse 12 – “For now we see through a glass, darkly (we have real dim vision, we cannot see very clearly); but then face to face (a clear vision, full understanding): now I know in part: but then shall I know even as also I am known.”



There is not any doubt about what that illustration is talking about. It is not talking about dying and going to heaven. It is talking about a partial knowledge that you have as a child – you only have dim vision. You look into the mirror, and it is all cloudy, and you cannot see it, and you cannot get a real clear picture. It is talking about a time when you do not have full revelation.

The end of verse 12 says, “but then shall I know even as also I am known.” I will be able to look in that mirror and see my features just like you can look at me clearly and see my features. I will have clear full knowledge.

He says that there is coming a time when the word of God will be complete; and when it is completed, all of those things that are used to give revelation will be over with. There is not going to be any need for any more revelation.

You have everything that you need today in the bible, in the word of God. You do not need the gifts of prophecy and tongues and knowledge to know what God says. You have the complete written record. Therefore, there is not any need for a man today to communicate to you some special revelation from God. You have all of it already written down for you in a book. Therefore, the revelation, and the revelatory process, is over with.

The Charismatic Movement is wrong in its attempts to go back and produce prophecy, and “tongue speaking” to get the revelations. In

1 Corinthians 14:26 Paul says, “How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation.” Added information is given because they do not have the complete bible. They do not have any bible except what Paul is beginning to produce. In Acts 19, when 1 Corinthians is written, the only things that have been written up to that time are 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians. So there is not a body of written revelation. Paul is given this information; it is a mystery. There is not a great understanding; they cannot go back into the Old Testament and search it. So they have this prophetic revelation of information for them. When the book is written down, there is not any need for more revelation.

Today, the Charismatic Movement is so dangerous because its doctrine teaches a continuing inspiration. When those folks stand up and speak in tongues, and they profess to have God put the words in their mouth, someone better write that stuff down because that is more bible. Do you understand what I am saying? That is why it is dangerous, and that is why anybody that has an answer to it needs to stand up and proclaim the answer to it. It is not just that it is

fanaticism. It is that in many cases and some times very sincerely. But it teaches you to come to the conclusion that the written word of God is not the final absolute authority.

We studied all along that Satan's object in his policy of evil against the word of God, (his purpose, his goal) is to destroy the final absolute authority of the bible. This is just another way to do it.

The revelation is complete, therefore, inspiration is complete. I hope you can see that.

I started in Exodus and came through Matthew so you understand the correlation between what is going on in Acts and that it is exactly the same phenomena.

It is going on in 1 Corinthians. That is why Paul says that it is going to cease. It is going to end when that full knowledge comes. When the complete word of God is there, then you will have full complete knowledge. You gain the complete knowledge because the revelation is complete.

When 1 Corinthians was written, they did not have a completed revelation.

When Jesus hung on the cross he said, "It is finished". That is the same identical word as "perfect". It is a different form of it, but it is the same identical word. The end of Colossians 1:28 says, "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." That word "perfect" is the same word. It means mature, brought to the complete end of the thing (from a child to a man).

We will go over one other thing. You know the bible is complete because the Old Testament canon was completed in the time of Christ, so you do not need to add the Apocrypha to that. You know the New Testament canon, and with regard to that, revelation has ceased, therefore, it has to be complete somewhere down the line.

There is not anybody adding any scripture today. Some people profess to be adding to the word of God.

The Charismatics do not profess that because they are basically fundamental, conservative, orthodox Christians. The Charismatics do it without professing to do it. Most of them have no idea what they are doing.

Number Three – You know the bible is complete because of the doctrine of preservation.

The doctrine of preservation gives you a biblical basis for your faith to rest upon – the fact that God not only has written his word down for us, but he also has pledged himself to keep it, preserve it through history.

It is important to have some reason in the bible to understand that God has done that.

I told you when we started Manuscript Evidence that the basis of your faith is not what you can prove in a library, or not what you feel, or not what you have always been taught by tradition, but by what you can prove in that book. The word of God is the basis of your faith.

You need to understand what the bible says about itself, not just because that is what you always believed but because you understand what the bible teaches about inspiration. I hope you understand that.

Now, we are going to begin studying what the bible teaches about preservation. You can know that God not only wrote the bible, but he has preserved it. You have the whole word of God because God pledged himself not just to write it down but also to preserve it through history for you and to make it available through history for you. You can believe that on the basis of a bible-believing viewpoint.

When we begin studying the details of Manuscript Evidence, you are going to scratch your head so hard at times because it gets real confusing. I mean that. But, you need to be able to back off and say, "What am I going to believe?" You should say, "I am going to believe the doctrine in this book first."

Now, there are some very important reasons for a written revelation. I will give you five of them.

Why would God be interested in having a written text and preserving that written text?

1. To preserve the original revelation.

Can you imagine how confusing and sloppy it would get if you were just passing on oral communication? If you get a line of people and whisper something in someone's ear at the beginning of the line and then he whispers it into the next person's ear and so on, by the time it reaches the last person, it will be something entirely different.

Now can you imagine how it would go if you had oral tradition to keep passing down the word of God. You never would know if you had it right or not.

God wanted his revelation preserved in a book.

2. A written text groups all the material together.

You can get all the material together under one cover. It would be horrible if you had to hunt around for people who had bits and pieces of the oral communication.

There are people taking this class from all over the place – in different cities and in different countries. Wouldn't it be a mess if we had to get all of the believers together to get all the information?

With the written text, you can get it all in one book.

3. *A written text is independent of the speaker and the writer.*

In Jeremiah 36, Jeremiah is in jail. He writes the thing down and gives it to his secretary and says, "Go read it to the king." It is independent of him.

Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:9 – "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound." He said, "They have me in jail like a criminal, but the word of God is not bound."

They wrote it down and sent it out. It is independent regardless of what happens to the speaker.

4. *The written text is mobile.*

It transcends the life and times of the writers and the students. It is mobile.

5. *The written text makes everybody responsible.*

Luke 16:29 – "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."
You have the book, so you have the revelation that you need.

MSS 101 – 9

The question is not just *is our bible inspired*, but the question is *did our inspired bible expire? Did it die?*

One of the questions on your last exam was *which theory of inspiration is the correct one?* And the correct answer is plenary verbal inspiration – that every word is inspired.

I asked you that question in correlation with the question *is that an adequate theory?* Of course, the answer is “no”.

The reason it is not adequate is because although it is an exactly proper statement on the issue of inspiration, it does not help you when it comes to the fact of locating the bible text.

It is very important that you understand inspiration, and when God wrote down his word, he did not write it down just to lose it. He did not inspire it just to allow it to die off and vanish out of history.

There are four popular views about the bible that you need to remember because you will see them in your ministry. These are not views necessarily in seminary campuses, but these are views that you will constantly encounter on the street.

1. The Roman Catholic View – holy mother church and tradition define what is in the scripture; they define what the bible is. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that they are the custodians of the scripture and that the issue is not the scripture, but the issue is what they say it is.
2. The Liberal View – the bible is full of myths, and legends, and mistakes, and fables, and stories. That is the common view of the unsaved man on the street.
3. The Neo-Orthodox View (“Neo” means “new”, and “orthodox” is “the standard position of something”) – the bible is supra history, which means it is above history; it is outside of history. It is capable of occasionally being the word of God, but it is above history. These are the people that tell you that Adam might have been a real historical figure, or he might not have been an historical figure. The issue is not whether Adam was a real man or not, but the issue is the truth that is being taught in the story. Occasionally it is an historical event, but you do not get all bent out of shape about the flood. They believe in the flood for its teaching value, not its historicity. It is above history. They take the story that is in the scripture, and they take it for what it is teaching. They use the allegorical method quite heavily.
4. The Fundamentalist (Average Conservative) View – all of the fundamentals of the faith are in the bible in spite of the mistakes in the various translations like

the King James Bible, or whatever. The average conservative or fundamentalist will tell you that all of the fundamentals of the faith are there in spite of the mistakes that are present in various translations.

My wife was telling me about a man that she heard preaching the other day, and he went after a passage in 1 Timothy 4 where it talks about godly edifying. He said, "I do not understand why the translators would have translated it that way because it is clearly something else in the Greek. It is clearly the word for 'administration' in the Greek." She said to me, "What about that?"

I said, "He clearly does not know enough about the Greek to know what it was." I understand why they translated it that way. It is because the Greek text that they had in front of them had it in it. I have one on my desk that has it in it.

People make those kinds of statements. Forty-seven men did not mistake the word for a different word. Forty-seven men that could read and write Greek like you and I read and write English did not mistake what that word was. They had a Greek text that had that word in it.

That is an interesting phenomena that somebody that cannot read and write Greek would stand up and chastise those men for that. But, that is the way the average fundamentalist believes.

They say that in spite of those mistakes that we say are there, all the fundamentals are there – salvation by grace and all that. The problem with the average fundamentalist is that all he is worried about is the fundamentals, and every Roman Catholic believes the fundamentals better than most fundamentalists do. (The Roman Catholics do not know anything about the gospel of grace or salvation or anything about the bible.)

All four of those views have one thing in common, and I want you to understand this. They all have one point of agreement. They all agree that you do not actually possess the word of God in your hands. None of them believe that it is possible for them to possess the word of God. They believe that the books that you have merely contain the word of God.

The Neo-Orthodox position, their argument, is as follows. *Is the bible the word of God or does the bible contain the word of God?* That is classic Neo-Orthodoxy theology.

I went to a college where the teachers and professors held a Neo-Orthodox doctrinal position. There was a constant burning discussion. *Is the bible the word of God? Is the bible an accurate reflection of what God wrote down back there, or does it just contain it?*

If you think back to the different views of inspiration, the issue is always verbal inspiration verses the dynamic inspiration – some type of thought, idea, message, or content as opposed to the very words.

So, you have this question. Is it the very words of God that count, or is it the message that counts?

You can take every viewpoint of inspiration, (outside of plenary verbal), and you can take every viewpoint about the bible that I just gave you, (except the one I haven't given you yet), and you will find out that they all believe the one basic same thing. They all believe that there are parts of that bible that are not really God's word. They believe the bible contains God's word, but there are parts that are not God's word.

When my wife was listening to that man preach the other day and he said, "That verse ought not be the way it is," he is really saying, "You do not have the complete word of God in your book. You do not possess it in your hands. You have a mistake in it."

Now, these Liberals, and Catholics, and Neo-Orthodox folks, and the Conservatives will argue about *how much* you should leave out of the bible.

The Liberal eliminates dozens of passages. He will use a New American Standard Bible, or a New International Version, or a New English Bible or one like that. He will leave out the last 10 verses in the book of Mark; he will leave out 12 verses in John (the last verse in John 7 and the first eleven verses of John 8). He will leave out verse after verse, and it does not bother him.

The Conservative will only take out one or two passages. He will say to the Liberal, "No, you cannot do that. We have to keep those verses." But, he will leave out the last half of Romans 8:1, or he will leave out 1 John 5:7. He will not leave out as many verses, but the approach is the same, and that is what I want you to grasp.

The approach to the bible is exactly the same with all of these people. They might argue about *how much* they will leave out, but they all agree that you must leave some of it out. They will argue about how much should be changed, but they will not argue whether it should be changed or not.

When you start talking about whether or not it should be changed, all of the sudden all of these people turn on you and attack you for your stand on the bible issue. All four groups attack you with equal vigor.

These people have different motives for doing what they do.

The Modernist does it because he thinks a person should be intellectual and they say to do it, so you do it because of that. He is heady and high-minded.

The Fundamentalist, or the Conservative, comes up against a verse like Romans 8:1 and he says, "If you leave the last part in it, it denies eternal security, so we must leave it out because we know eternal security is the truth." However, he fails to read the context of the passage and find out that eternal security has not been an issue in the book of Romans since chapter 5. The book of Romans put completely to bed the issue of salvation, justification, and security in

Romans 5. Romans 3, 4, and 5 take care of that completely. When we study that, you will see how fantastically Paul nails it down.

But when you get to Romans 6,7, and 8, you are talking about the believer's life – his activity here. He is free from sin (chapter 6); he is free from the law (chapter 7). Paul begins chapter 8 with "There is therefore", meaning "because of what I said in chapter 7 about your walk." Do you see that? You must leave it in because that is the context.

I challenge people all the time to study Romans 7 and 8 with the possibility that it might be in there.

I met with a man this past weekend that I challenged with that statement last summer. This weekend he said to me, "I have been studying it that way, and if you just read it over and over thinking that verse must be in there, all that stuff just begins to open up."

He was climbing on me trying to convince me it was in there.

I said, "Wait a minute. Do you remember who told you it was there to start with?"

He just got excited about it, and that is precious!

Now, some of these people that think verses should be left out, do so because they are heady and high-minded, and some of them have other motives.

A Fundamentalist will usually have a better motive than the others have. However, the motives are not the issue but what they are doing is the issue – their approach.

You need to develop an approach to the bible, and a viewpoint of the bible, that is going to reflect your doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration

There is one other view that I want you to know. I just categorized this as a separate one. I call this one the *Bible-Believer's Viewpoint*. I hesitate to call it the Fundamentalist Viewpoint because the Fundamentalists are really in that other class.

The Bible-Believer's Viewpoint simply means that you do have the inspired word of God in your hands. In other words, God has preserved his word through history, and you can get it in the form that he intended you to have it in. As we will find out in our study of Manuscript Evidence, that form for you and for me is the Authorized Version, the King James Bible, because we are English speaking people and that is our bible.

I was in a meeting, just a few weeks ago in Canada, with a man who has members of his church in Bolivia, and they developed a language for a tribe. This tribe had no written language, so this man went in there and developed the written language; and he is now

translating the bible into their language. He was explaining about the difficulty in translating into a language that did not exist before. They are translating the Authorized Version into that language.

Folks, you would be surprised where that bible is today, and it is in all kinds of different languages. You do not have to speak whatever that language is that he developed. That language does not even have a name. You do not have to speak their language because you speak English, and do not have to worry about all of that stuff.

God takes care of those kinds of things, and he raises up people, just like you men and women taking this class, to go out and do those kinds of things. The Lord will have some things like that for you to do in the days ahead.

When you get yourself built up to the place where the inner motivation of God the Holy Spirit can work in your soul and motivate you to do what he has given you and equipped you to do, you will see that God will put you in places like that to do the same kinds of things.

That man is down there translating the bible into that newly developed language.

So, the Bible-Believer's Viewpoint is that God wrote it, but he also preserved it through history, and we can get our hands on it right now.

Look at 2 Timothy 3, and I will show you something about this verse that I did not talk very much about it when we looked at it the first time. I will try to make you read this passage in a way that is not the common way that it is read. I want you to understand some things about it with regard to the issue of preservation.

2 Timothy 3:16 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” We studied the issue of inspiration extensively – all scripture is given by inspiration of God. It is God-breathed. The words literally came out of the mouth of God. Jesus said, “The words proceeded out of the mouth of God.” God dictated the words out. This verse says, “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God.”

2 Timothy 3:15 – “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures.” If Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures from his childhood, then his mother and his grandmother had copies of the word of God and taught it to him.

Verse 16 says that the copies that they taught Timothy were inspired.

Inspiration and preservation go hand in hand in the text that teaches the issue of inspiration. The scriptures in verse 16 are clearly qualified by the scriptures of verse 15, and it is a reference to copies of the Old Testament. They did not have the original manuscripts, but they had copies.

When he says, “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God,” that is a reference to something that Timothy could get his hands on somewhere. It was not a reference to some nebulous thing in the past that nobody ever saw at one time.

(Do you realize that nobody ever saw a complete bible made up of original manuscripts? The bible was written over a period of 1500 years. The books were never all collected together at one time.)

Verse 16 is not a reference to something that Timothy could not find, but it is a reference to copies of the scriptures.

By the way, do you know what the average commentary tells you the scripture in verse 15 is? LXX is the Roman numeral 70, and it is an abbreviation for the Septuagint, which is used in discussing bible translations. The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Old Testament.

(By the way, MSS is the abbreviation for manuscripts (plural) and MS is the abbreviation for manuscript (singular).

If you looked at the critical commentaries, they would tell you that Timothy was reading the LXX, the Septuagint, in 2 Timothy 3:15.

The Septuagint is said to have been translated in 250 BC. In the next semester, when we begin to study these things, we will find out that the LXX is a hoax, and that it was not translated in 250 BC. It never showed up until about 250 AD.

But, the point is that some people say that Timothy is reading the Septuagint in 2 Timothy 3:15. If it is the Septuagint in verse 15 that means Paul calls a translation of the Old Testament the inspired word of God. So why should they get all bent out of shape when you call your English translation the word of God. Do you see how inconsistent that is?

That will get you in trouble somewhere, but I want you to gain that perspective out of the passage.

That text is a fantastic text because God has promised to preserve his word through time and history.

We are going to talk about the promise of preservation in this lesson. I want you to understand something. The issue of preservation is not merely a philosophical necessity; it is a bible fact. It is not a philosophical necessity for me to say that God had to have done it because logic tells me. I believe in preservation because God says that he is going to preserve his word. You need to be aware of a proper estimation of what God’s word is – it is the issue of inspiration plus preservation.

Around the turn of the century the original manuscript statement (It was inspired in the original manuscripts.) was added to the standard doctrinal statements. Up until that time, doctrinal

statements of conservatives did not say “the original manuscripts.” They just said, “the bible.” But, as they combated the Liberals and the Modernists who had these dynamic views of inspiration, and the lesser views of inspiration, they added that statement trying to strengthen their statement on inspiration.

Back in the late 1800s and the early 1900s, around the turn of the century, there was a tremendous controversy going on between good, conservative, fundamental men and German Rationalism. German Rationalism was a school of thought in Germany, which is a higher criticism. They tore up the bible and said, “It is just like any other book, and it is not inspired.”

It was just like some of those views we went over in this lesson, like the Liberal View. They were combating some of those ranker views. They were combating all of those lesser views of inspiration. They were really battling, and Chicago was one of the hotbeds of the real battle.

(That is where Mr. O’Hare made his name around Chicago – combating these issues.)

As these men were trying to state their position, they added that phrase in. I personally cannot grasp completely why they thought it strengthened their position.

If you do a study of the history of doctrinal statements, you will see quite clearly where they added it in. You go back and get the old Westminster Confessions, and you will see that they do not have anything like that. In fact, they have clear statements of preservation in them.

I am not throwing rocks at these men for what they did, or for their motive in what they did, but they failed to realize that they were missing the real issue that they should have been debating. They were missing the concept of preservation. They caused a false division between the bible that God wrote and the bible that men have perpetuated and brought down through history. They made out like God wrote an original manuscript back there, and then he was through. It was in the hands of men, and men perpetuated it through history. That is a false issue. That is not true. In reality, they should have recognized that God not only inspired his word, but God himself, who inspired it, has also designed to preserve that text through history.

But, the issue of preservation began to get shoved to the side, and it was not discussed. When you leave preservation out, you make a false division. You make a bible that God wrote, but one that he did not keep.

Now, you need to remember that and be conscious of the fact that the God that wrote the bible is going to preserve it. We will go over about 25 verses in this lesson just to get the feel and the sense of what the bible says about the promise of preservation. I want to read a bunch of verses in this lesson that just say, “I am going to preserve my words.”

If the doctrine of preservation is an issue, and it is real, we need to ascertain what the doctrine of preservation is in the scripture.

You need to be aware and keep in your mind Satan's policy of evil, his policy of corrupting, and watering down, and trying to destroy the final authority of the written word of God. He is not going to allow that book to just exist without opposition.

We will look at some verses now, and I want you to see the promise that God is going to preserve his word. The doctrine of preservation is a doctrine in the bible. We will study from here on out how God said, in his word, that he is going to do that.

In the next semester, we will not put the bible aside, but we will get into the actual textual divisions and discussions.

Men can go out and gather material, but unless you have a bible basis, unless you understand what the bible says about how God is going to do something, you do not know how to interpret the material.

There are two major schools of textual criticism today. One is the Critical Text and one is the Majority Text. One is the New Bibles and one is the King James Bible.

If you understand the bible doctrine of how God is going to preserve his word, you do not have to listen to all of the evidence that these men present. You know which of the two is right based on doctrine.

Folks, the basis of your faith is not human logic and viewpoint, but it is that book – the bible. I know people get all upset and bent out of shape about that stuff, but when you find out why they do it, you find out that they have been coaxed and seduced into going on the basis of human viewpoint.

Psalm 12:6,7 – “The words of the LORD *are* pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”

The two doctrines (inspiration and preservation) go hand in hand, and yet, the doctrinal statements that are available today omit the issue of preservation. For some reason, they ignore it and fail to deal with it.

If God wrote his book, where is it now? More important than that, in my opinion, is who determines what it is when you find it? That is the issue. If I say, “I found it”, who is going to decide whether I am right or not? Will a bunch of scholars in an ivory tower that read and study the bible from a critical viewpoint (not from the attitude of faith, but from a natural viewpoint, an unbelieving viewpoint) decide if I am right? Who is going to determine it?

Let me ask you something else. Isn't “the who” that determines it determined by who you think “the who” is? Isn't who you allow to tell you what the bible is really determined by who you think he is, or who he thinks somebody else is? All of sudden you are wondering *where is that final authority?* It is gone; it is in the men; it is in who you think the “who” is.

Do you know what happens then? Educators come along, and we all have to think good of educators, don't we? Do you see how that works?

I am interested in knowing if there is any objective proof for any of this stuff, and there is in the bible. You want to base your viewpoints first on faith, on the doctrine of the book.

A lot of people believe the King James Bible, but it is just radicalism with them. That is not what it is with me, and I do not want that to be true about you. Others say, "The old King James Bible; it is good enough for Paul so it is good enough for me." Then they laugh about it. That may not be that far off if the King James Bible is the translation of the manuscripts Paul wrote. If Paul could have spoken English and he translated what he wrote into English for me, I would have the same bible that I have today.

Psalm 12:7 – "Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." God has promised to preserve his word throughout history.

Psalm 33:11 – "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." The counsel of the LORD is a reference to his word.

Psalm 119:89 – "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." God is not going to lose his word; it is settled. He has the issue settled.

Psalm 119:152 – "Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever." God did not write the bible just to lose it or let it vanish, or let the paper that it was written on get all tore up, thus not in existence anymore.

Psalm 119:160 – "Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever."

Turn to Matthew 5. Here is a reference made by Jesus Christ about the original manuscripts and about their preservation (not the preservation of the original manuscript itself, but of the words that were written down in it). Matthew 5:18 – "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The jot and the tittle are two tiny little markings in the Hebrew letter. He is not even talking about the words, but he is talking about the littlest part of letters, and he says that even those will not be lost. He is going to preserve them. God has an interest in keeping his word in tact.

Luke 16:17 – "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." You get the idea that the preservation of the word is important to the Lord.

People say that it is so easy for copyists to make a mistake and to corrupt the word of God. They say there are copyist's errors in the bible. Yet, God said it is easier for the earth to pass away than for his word to be lost.

Luke 21:33 – "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." He is talking about the words on the page.

1 Peter 1:23-25 – “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. FOR ALL FLESH IS AS GRASS, AND ALL THE GLORY OF MAN AS THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERETH, AND THE FLOWER THEREOF FALLETH AWAY: BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURETH FOR EVER. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

Peter said, “I am preaching the gospel to you out of the book, and the book is going to last forever.”

Isaiah 40:8 is the Old Testament passage that Peter was referring to. “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” Other things pass away, but that book just hangs in there.

Turn to Isaiah 30:8 – “Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever.” Notice what he tells them to do. He says, “Go write this thing down in a book so I can keep it forever and ever.”

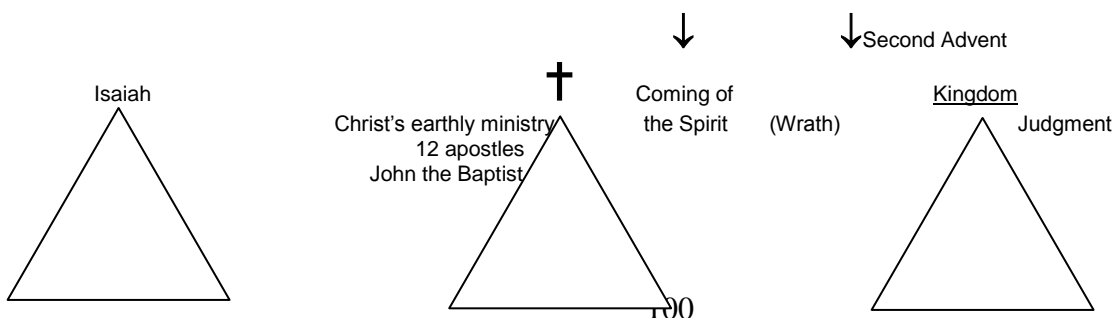
People will tell you that he is not talking about preserving his word in a book, but he is just talking about preserving the message. That is not what he is talking about there. When God talks about preserving his words, he is talking about preserving his words that are written on the page in a book.

Inspiration has to do with the words on the page. Preservation is taking those words on the page and preserving those words through history.

Watch this thing go. Isaiah 59:20 – “And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.” What is that a reference to? That is a reference to the Second Coming of Christ.

Do you know where that passage is found in the New Testament? It is found in Romans 11. Paul quotes that passage in Romans 11:26,27 as a reference to the Second Advent of Christ and the salvation of Israel when Christ comes back at the Advent.

Imagine Isaiah is in time past standing on a mountaintop, and he looks out at some other mountaintops. On one of the mountaintops, he sees the cross of Christ; he sees John the Baptist in Isaiah 40, and he sees Jesus Christ and his ministry on the earth in Isaiah 42. He sees the twelve apostles in Isaiah 8. He sees the coming of the Spirit. Then on another mountaintop he looks out in the future from there and sees some wrath and some judgment. Then he sees the Second Advent of Christ, and he sees a Kingdom being set up over there.



(Body of Christ)

Isaiah cannot see down in the valley where the body of Christ is because it is a secret. So, in Isaiah 61 God writes a passage that Christ will quote in His earthly ministry, and then there is a comma in the middle of the passage, and then there will be a day of vengeance in the future.

You know how it is when you are up on a hill or mountain and you look to another high area, and you cannot tell how far it is in between. Isaiah could not see down in the valley because it was kept a secret. He could see all of the things involved with the Kingdom Program, but he could not see the body of Christ. He could see those mountain peaks, but he could not see the dispensation of grace.

In Isaiah 59 he is talking about the Second Coming of Christ back to the earth. Isaiah 59:20,21 – “And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.” He is talking about the people in the millennium. They have the word that God put in their mouth back in Isaiah (the Old Testament), and he says, “Even after the millennium, my word is still going to last forever and ever.”

Folks, if the millennium is 2000 AD plus and Isaiah is 700 BC, you have preservation for 2700 years right there demanded in the text in order to meet the qualifications of the text. God said, “I put the words in your mouth (Isaiah) and wrote them down in a book to be there forever, and they will be available at the Second Advent of Christ, and they will even continue after that.” That is preservation.

If I can demonstrate, in the bible, that in the millennium God says his word is going to be present, then I can sure demonstrate the fact that it is somewhere in the dispensation of grace. If God will have his word in the millennium, he is going to preserve it through the time before the millennium.

Isaiah 29:18,19 – “And in that day (the millennium) shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” The Antichrist is gone and the Redeemer (verse 22) is there, and they have the Kingdom in place. In that Kingdom, when the deaf hear, they will hear the words of the bible that Isaiah is told to write down. God is going to preserve that book. That is the doctrine of preservation; that is God’s promise to preserve his word.

When you are studying preservation, you are not studying a figment of some fellow’s imagination who just likes to run off at the mouth without studying.

There are a lot of real simple people in the world who believe in the preservation of the scripture. They believe that they have the preserved word of God, but they do not have all of that fancy scholarship and information. They just have faith to believe that God Almighty has preserved his word.

I want you to remember this. *Any believer that you meet that does not believe in the issue of preservation has been taught not to believe it.* Every believer that you know that does not believe the King James Bible is the right bible has been taught not to believe it. You have an intuitive internal witness put in you by God the Holy Spirit to the truth of his word, to identify his word. If you allow that to operate, you will believe the King James Bible is his word.

When you find people that do not believe the King James Bible is the correct bible, but they believe that some other bible is the right one, they have been taught not to believe the authorized version but to believe something else.

MSS 101 – 10

We are beginning our second study in the doctrine of preservation. In this lesson, I want to talk about the process of preservation. In the last lesson, we saw the issue of a promise – how God promised to preserve his word. It is very important that you understand how he designed to do that.

Psalm 149:1,2 – “PRAISE ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.” This Psalm is a prophetic look into the future, into the kingdom reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 149:6 – *Let* the high *praises* of God *be* in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand.” This passage is describing the Second Coming of Christ and the execution of judgment at that time.

Verses 7-9 – “To execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron (millennial kingdom); To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.” (That is Revelation 19.)

Now, notice in verse 9 that they are to execute the judgment that is written. It is written in the word of God, the bible.

Deuteronomy 32, Numbers 24, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, Zephaniah, and all the prophets back there, describe the wrath, and the vengeance of God, and the judgment that will be executed upon the nations of the earth and upon the nation Israel in that day. The judgment is written in the bible.

Psalm 149 is a passage about the Second Advent of Christ where these people will go out and execute the judgment written. They must have a bible when the Second Coming of Christ takes place in order to know what judgment is to be executed. They will go out to certain places and perform certain acts – certain activities are to be executed. These things are written in the word of God, and those people must have a bible preserved for them all the way to the kingdom.

There are many other verses that we did not look at in the last lesson that indicate that the word of God will be preserved through time and through history.

God has designed to preserve his word. There is a very clearly described process for that preservation – not just the promise that he is going to do it and then just throw it out into the seas of time without any definite teaching about how he is going to do it. There is a very definite process of how God is going to preserve his word.

I want you to see the process in this lesson. We will do more with this in the next couple of lessons, but in this lesson, I just want you to see the basic introduction. We will carefully look at the process so you can grasp the material in bite-size nuggets.

Let me review just a few things that we talked about before. We will look at them from a little different angle than how we looked at them when we were studying the issue of inspiration.

Jesus Christ gives two very clearly stated canonical statements. (You should be thoroughly familiar with them by now, because we have discussed them at great length.) We saw how Christ defines the Old Testament canon. He fixes the canon, (the contents of a Jewish bible), during his life. It was fixed, and he put his seal of approval on it.

Luke 11:49-51 – “Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute: That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.” The blood of the prophets will be required. In verse 51, he says, “From the blood of Abel (that is recorded in Genesis 4) unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple” (that is recorded in 2 Chronicles 24).

We would say, “The blood from Genesis to Revelation, or from Abel to the Great White Throne, or from Abel to the Millennium.” If I say something like that, what am I talking about? I would mean from the beginning of the bible to the end of the bible and everything in-between.

Abel is in Genesis and Zacharias is in 2 Chronicles.

I gave you the order of the books in a Hebrew bible previous to this lesson. Genesis is the first book in a Hebrew bible and 2 Chronicles is the last book in a Hebrew bible. The Hebrew bible has exactly the same books that your Old Testament has in it. The Old Testament in the King James Bible has exactly the same books found in the Hebrew Bible, however, the order that they are arranged in is different. The King James Bible ends with the book of Malachi, because the book of Malachi ends with a message to the Gentiles. The last word in the book of Malachi is the word “curse.” Cursed be everyone that keepeth not the law. You are under the curse.

There are 39 books in the King James Old Testament. That is 3 x 13. 13 is the number of “rebellion” in the word of God, and that is what you have in the Old Testament. The curse of the law (3 x 13).

The Hebrew Bible has 24 books in it (2 x 12). The number 12 is for Israel. It is 3 x 8 and 8 is the number of a new beginning.

There is all kind of numerology and all kinds of interesting things that go along with it, but the point is that the books are the same.

So, Christ identifies the contents of the Old Testament as Genesis to 2 Chronicles exactly like your bible. Luke 24:44 – “And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in (1) the law of Moses, and (2) *in* the prophets, and (3) *in* the psalms, concerning me.” That is the threefold division (the law, the prophets, and the psalms) of your Old Testament in a Hebrew Bible. It is divided up as the Torah, the Nebhiim, and the Kethubhim.

I want you to see that the Old Testament canon was fixed in the Lord Jesus Christ’s day.

Turn to John 10:34,35 – “Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I SAID, YE ARE GODS? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken.” Jesus Christ refers to the word of God that these people possess. My point is that they do not have the original manuscripts. They have copies of the word of God just like you and I have a copy of the word of God.

Jesus Christ says to them, “The copy is what God says to you, and it is what was written down, and it cannot be broken. It is the word of God, and it cannot be destroyed.”

Turn to Matthew 22. We looked at this verse time and again because this verse means an awful lot to me, as I told you before. Matthew 22:31 – “But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying.” They did not have original manuscripts. They had copies of the word of God. They had copies that they were reading; and Jesus said, “You can pick that copy up, and when you read that thing, you are reading what God said to you.” That tells me that God’s design is to preserve his word in copies. Do not forget that! The process of preservation is going to be preserving the word in a multiplicity of copies – the multiplying of copies of the bible.

The issue with regard to the original manuscripts is not really the issue with God. The original manuscripts are not the only issue with God. Do not misunderstand me; they are an issue because God has to write it down to start with. Inspiration has to do with the original manuscripts, and they wrote them down. But, that is not the only issue either in inspiration or in preservation. It is certainly not the only issue with God. God designed to preserve what was written down in the original manuscripts in copies of those original manuscripts, and the copies are the issue with God.

The original manuscripts are not the only issue. They are lost, and we do not have any of them. In fact, there has never been a time in human history where there was one bible collected together at one time made up of nothing but original manuscripts. So, if you must have original manuscripts, then you are in trouble. God has a more important plan than just trying to preserve one copy of the bible with that one copy being the original manuscript.

God Almighty knows the nature of man. If we had a copy of the original manuscripts today, with the idolatrous nature of man, somebody would have those things in a museum somewhere worshipping them, or they would probably have them in a church somewhere under glass.

The issue is that God knows the idolatrous nature of man. Therefore, to eliminate the possibility of taking the word of God and making an idol of it, rather than taking it and making it the living word of God that it is, God has seen fit not to preserve the originals. He developed a better plan.

Turn to 2 Kings 18:4 – “He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made.” Moses made that thing back in Numbers 21, hundreds of years before this, and they still have it. It is a part of the national archives of Israel, but do you know what they are doing with it? Read the end of verse 4 – “for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it.” That is wild! This is the time of Hezekiah, which is hundreds of years after Moses, and they have that brasen serpent that Moses made, and they are worshipping that thing. That is Baal worship; that is idolatry. There is something that God commissioned – God told Moses to make it; God blessed the people when they looked at it. Yet, man gets his dirty rotten stinky hands on it, and he turns it into an idol.

The original manuscripts are not the issue with God. In fact, the term “original manuscripts” is just a catch phrase developed by scholars to discredit the word of God.

There is a system, an epistemology of thought and teaching, called “textual criticism.” You need to be familiar with that term. Textual criticism is simply a bunch of fellows trying to reconstruct the original text. They are trying to reconstruct and recreate and decide what the original manuscripts looked like. These scholars that become textual critics, like Westcott and Hort, and Scrivener, and John W. Burgon, are men that specialize in digging into the manuscript issues. Eberhard Nestle and Kurt Aland are also textual critics. In fact, Aland is the leading textual critic today. Anytime manuscripts are discovered today, it is Aland’s job to categorize them, and to identify them, and to name them, and so forth to keep uniformity in the field of manuscript study.

When men try to reconstruct the original text, it results in having no absolute and final authority except for the scholars.

I can take my bible and begin to read it, and then one of these guys says, “We are not sure about the reading, and maybe there’s a better reading.” All of the sudden who makes the decision is the important thing. The scholars union becomes the final authority, and you must have their union card before you can identify the bible. Pretty soon the simple ordinary man on

the street is lost, and you develop that elitist viewpoint that we will study in the next lesson in the book of Romans chapter one.

When you hear about the older manuscripts and the original manuscripts, there is really a lot of phoniness about that. The older manuscript issue is a hoax. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia on page 2955 has a very interesting admission. They say that the older manuscripts are not in every case the better reading. That is an interesting admission for the scholars to make because it is exactly true. Just because a manuscript is older that does not mean that it is best. It might just be an old corruption.

In this class, you want to learn that the original manuscripts are not the only issue with God, but rather, he has a plan and a purpose to preserve his word in copies. His plan has never been to preserve the original manuscripts down through history, because that has not happened. In his word, it is very clear that the way he has designed to preserve his word is in a multiplicity of copies.

There are two ideas about manuscript evidence and reconstruction of a text today. One idea is the current idea of the critical text that is out there today. In the last 100 years this has become “the” idea – that the oldest texts are the best because they are the closest to the original text. That idea has in it the thought and the basis that you have to restore the original text in order to have the word of God, because God’s design would be to preserve just the original text. Thus, since he has not done that, we must take the copies that we have and try to go back and get as close to the originals as possible.

That is good human viewpoint; it is good human logic and human reason. It stands to reason that if I am going to reconstruct Shakespeare, the easiest thing to do would be to go back to the closest one to his original manuscripts; and if we have an original, use that.

But that is not the way to go about reconstructing the bible text, because God’s word is very clear that he did not determine that it is to be done in that way.

The other school of thought is that it is not the older manuscripts that are the issue, but the issue is the majority of the manuscripts. In other words, you go out and you find all of these copies that are used, and you find the reading that is in the majority of these copies, and that should be the correct reading, because God has preserved his word through the multiplicity of copies.

So you have “the older manuscript view” and you have on the other side – “the majority manuscript view”. Textual critics are divided between those two viewpoints.

As you and I study this doctrine, we will find that it is very clear in the word of God which of the two is correct; because God has designed to preserve his word by multiplying copies so everybody has a copy making corruption very difficult.

God never designed the older manuscript view. Let me demonstrate that to you. Turn to Exodus 31. I want you to notice what happens to some original manuscripts in your bible. We will look at two different illustrations in the word of God about God's attitude towards original manuscripts. Look at the very last verse in Exodus 31 – "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." Moses got the original manuscripts from God. They were written with the finger of God, which is a reference to the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:20). Moses had God's word in written form. In fact, that is the "original" original manuscript; that is the very first time that we know of God ever writing anything down.

Moses came down off of Mount Sinai with the original manuscript. I imagine he was a pretty proud fellow when he came down there with the Ten Commandments. He had the words from God and was bringing them back to the Nation. He came down the mountain in Exodus 32. If you read the passage and become familiar with it, you will see that when he came down, they had the golden calf that the people built.

Exodus 32:15 – "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written." God had a lot of things to say so he wrote on both sides of the stone.

Verse 16 – "And the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tables."

God did not even use a man to write these. These are the "original" originals. They were not even written by Moses, but they were written by God Himself. You cannot get much more original than that.

Notice what happens. Exodus 32:17-19 – "And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, *There is* a noise of war in the camp. And he said, *It is* not the voice of *them that* shout for mastery, neither *is it* the voice of *them that* cry for being overcome: *but* the noise of *them that* sing do I hear. And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, (notice what he does) and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." There was a fellow that had the original manuscripts, and he took them down there and destroyed them before anybody had a chance to read them.

If you read on down through that passage, you will notice that God did not get mad at Moses for breaking the original manuscripts. Moses did not even get upset about breaking the original manuscripts. It was no big deal.

Moses had tablets that God Almighty wrote on with his own finger, and he destroyed them, and God does not punish him for it. If the issue with God was preserving his word in the original manuscripts, he should have gotten mad as the dickens at Moses because Moses was destroying what God intended to preserve. If God said, "I will preserve my word forever," and he planned to do it in the original manuscripts, when Moses threw those tablets down, they would have bounced back up. They would not have broken. God Almighty can keep a stone together if some man throws it down if God does not want it to break.

God's design is not to just preserve the originals. God's design is to do something else. The very first original was destroyed by the man that God gave it to, and God does not get all upset about it. God allowed it, and it was not a big deal. Moses did not think that he committed any big sin when he broke those tables.

If you turn to Exodus 34, you will notice what God does in the face of Moses' actions. Verses 1 and 2 – "AND the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount." Moses went up, and he got two tables of stone.

God says, "Moses, I wrote them and they were destroyed; but that is all right because I am going to preserve my word." God takes the initiative and makes a copy of the original and gives it to Moses.

Moses takes that thing and puts it in a box down in verses 27 and 28 – "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." Moses made a copy of the original. God wrote the original with his own finger and Moses broke the things. Then, God said, "Okay, Moses, you write this down; I will give you a copy of what I wrote." God then dictates, to Moses, a copy of what he originally wrote.

Moses took the copy and put it in a box in Deuteronomy 10. We will study that later on.

The point is that God preserved his words through copies. He did not need the original manuscripts, and you and I do not need the original manuscripts. We do not need the

Scholar's ability to reconstruct the original manuscripts from human viewpoint. God has a more important design. God is going to preserve his word through copies.

When the original manuscript was destroyed, it did not get God all upset, and it did not get Moses all bothered. God said, "Moses just come over and sit down, and I will give it to you, and you can write it down so you have the copy." Then Moses made the copy.

Turn to Jeremiah 36:1-4. "AND it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book." Jeremiah dictates the words like we talked about (inspiration), and Baruch writes them down. That is the written word of God put onto paper. The original manuscript is produced.

Jeremiah 36:5,6 – "And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I *am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD (He is in jail): Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house."

I told you that one of the purposes for writing the word of God down is that it makes it mobile. Jeremiah is in jail, just like Paul was in jail in 2 Timothy when Paul said, "I am bound but the word of God is not bound." Jeremiah is in jail, and he cannot get out, but he can write it down and send it out. The valuable thing about the written word of God is that it gives you the ability to take the copy to the man on the street.

That is exactly what he does in Jeremiah 36:6 – "Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities." In other words, it is for the common man on the street to understand. God always has his word for the common man on the street. It is not for the scholars. It is for the men on the street, which is why you always want to communicate to people so they can get it and understand it, because God wants his word communicated to the man on the street. That is the reason God does it the way he does – he always uses street language.

Cornea Greek was the language of the common vernacular spoken on the streets of the Empire at that time.

Jeremiah 36:7,8 – “It may be they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people. And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD’s house.” He produces the written word of God and it is preached.

Jeremiah 36:14-16 – “Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, (he has all kinds of credentials and status), unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and come unto them. And they said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch read *it* in their ears. Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid both one and other, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words.”

Jeremiah 36:21-23 – “So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe’s chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood before the king. Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth.”

That rascal was the first destructive critic to penknife the word of God and cut it up. He destroyed the original manuscript. He took the original manuscript that Jeremiah had written, and he cut the thing up, and he threw it into the fire, and he watched it burn thinking that he destroyed the word of God.

If God had to have the original manuscripts to preserve his word, he would not have allowed that rascal to do that. You do not need the original manuscripts to preserve the word or God would not have allowed that to happen.

Listen people. All of the original manuscripts have been destroyed. We do not have any of them.

Why would God allow for all the original manuscripts to be destroyed? There is only one reason, and that is because he has something better, something more important than the original manuscripts. God has a plan, and a design, and a process of preserving his word that is more important than the original manuscripts.

Jeremiah 36:24-26 – “Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Nevertheless Elnathan and Delilah and

Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them. But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.” They were trying to get the guys that wrote the word.

Listen to me. If God had to have the original manuscripts to preserve his word, God could have hid the book as easy as the men that wrote the book!

Jeremiah 36:27,28 – “Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, (watch what God does; he will preserve his word even though the originals were destroyed), and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned.” God took care of it, and it was not a problem to God that the original was destroyed. God took care of the thing, and he fixed it and produced a copy of the original that was just as good as the original. That was no problem for God.

Jeremiah 36:32 – “Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.” He did not write exactly the same; he just added a whole bunch of other stuff in there too. (You lose the scholars when you start talking about that.)

You need to understand that God’s design is not to preserve the originals. God’s design is to preserve his word through copies of the originals, and the originals are not the only issue. It is not that the original has to be preserved in itself, but rather that copies of the original are made that are just as authoritative as the originals.

We will see that process in the next few lessons in great detail. The issue is not just the original manuscripts, but God has preserved his word in the form that he intends you and me to have it, and he will do that no matter what – original manuscripts or no originals. The originals can be destroyed, and it does not affect the effectiveness of the preservation of the word of God for us today.

MSS 101 – 11

In this lesson, we will continue to study the doctrine of preservation, and look at the process of preservation.

In the last lesson, we studied that the issue in preservation is not simply the original manuscripts. God's design is to preserve his word, and the process of this preservation is to preserve his word in copies. God's design is not simply to take a set of original manuscripts and preserve one set of manuscripts (the original autographs) through history, but rather, it is to preserve his word through a multiplicity of accurate and reliable copies of those originals. Those copies are as authoritative as those original autographs were when they were written.

In a previous lesson, I said, "It is not simply the issue of the originals." I want you to understand something about that statement. The originals *are* the issue in inspiration, and it is not right to say that the originals are not an issue at all. They are an issue because God originally gave them. But, they are not the *only* issue with God and his word.

Inspiration demands preservation. Preservation has to do with the fact that God took the original words that he wrote down, and he is preserving them in accurate, reliable copies. It is important that you understand that God's design in preservation is to preserve his word in a multiplicity of copies.

When you understand that he is going to preserve his word in a multiplicity of copies, you understand that the preservation will be done without the original manuscripts. I explained that to you in the last lesson – God's design is not to preserve the original manuscripts.

If that were the case, somebody would put them under a piece of glass somewhere and charge you \$5.00 to look at them. They would make an idol out of them, and they would make idolatry out of the study of God's word.

We all know who would do that! He lives in Rome in a little state called the Vatican. He only does that which man by nature does.

We saw in Romans 1:21-25 that man by nature is idolatrous. He tries to cover up the truth, and hide the truth, and he uses a religious system of idolatry to do it.

Thus, in order to hide the truth of the word of God, if the originals were there, they would make idols out of them, just like they did with the brazen serpent.

But, rather than preserving the original manuscripts, God preserves his word in copies; and preservation is the issue when you begin to discuss where the word of God is today.

Now, when you understand that preservation is the issue, you know immediately that modern textual criticism is wrong.

Do you remember what textual criticism is? Textual criticism is a science of reconstructing the bible text. Modern textual criticism takes the approach that the bible is like any other book on the market. Therefore, to reconstruct the text of the bible, you must go back and find the original manuscripts.

Every attempt to reconstruct the bible text is not bad if you go with the bible's viewpoint. However, when you take the viewpoint that the bible is like any other piece of literature, you have human viewpoint attacking the divine viewpoint. Consequently the scholars tell us *We are not real sure what the bible said unless you have the original manuscripts.* That is human viewpoint attacking divine viewpoint and destroying the absolute final authority of the word of God.

When you hear people tell you that you do not really know what God said unless you have that original manuscript, that is just human viewpoint. That is a denial, or a misunderstanding, or a lack of understanding of some of the things you are learning about the issues of preservation.

Let me warn you about something in that regard. Do not always assume that somebody that does not understand these things does not believe them. You cannot disbelieve something that you do not know about.

A long time ago I came to understand the issue about the Authorized Version and the manuscript evidence and so forth. But, before I understood that, if you would have asked me what bible was the best, I would have told you the American Standard Version was the best. There was a time when I was a very strong proponent of the American Standard Version.

I thank God for the fact that I had enough sense back then to know that if I believed the American Standard Version was right, then that was the version I used when I preached.

If I believed the American Standard Bible to be the right version today, do you know what one I would use? I would use the American Standard, because I would try to have the integrity of my convictions.

My advisors told me that the American Standard was the best, but they also told me not use that when I preach.

I never could understand that until I began preaching and found out that nobody wanted me to use that version. People always wanted me to use the King James Bible. Yet, I said, "No, I need to educate people and tell them what kind is the best." As I began to do that, I began to run into some opposition and some of that opposition laid some facts in front of me about the differences between the versions that I never considered. I began to consider those things, and I began to see that the American Standard Bible was not really the best; although my uncle was told at Seminary that it was the best, and I believed him when he told me that. Then, I got some more information and found out differently.

I have very little respect for a man that says he believes the critical texts, (the new bibles), and yet lays those new bibles aside and picks up a King James Bible just because his audience demands it.

Listen to me. If you go away from here, and you believe the new text, and I cannot convince you about the Authorized Version and the Majority Text, do not be so spineless, and without conviction, that you will believe one bible is the right one but use the other bible to preach with because of the audience. Get some convictions somewhere along the line about what is right. If you believe the other bible is right, then use it in spite of what the audience says. It is a charlatan, and a hireling, and a false prophet that allows his audience to tell him what the truth is and what he should do. I hope you do not need me to repeat that!

When you preach, preach with the boldness of conviction that what you are doing is right regardless of the results out there.

We had a man at a board meeting in our church about two or three weeks ago and we discussed the issue of the bible. I asked him point blank which bible he thought was right and point blank which bible his ministry was going to support. I asked him straight out. In every case, he gave us the indication that they would promote the King James Bible. Yet, that man was in Florida selling a book that denies the reliability of the King James Bible, and the text that it is based on, and attacks the King James Bible in no uncertain terms. Yet, he was down there selling that book.

I asked this man about selling that book, and he said, "I think that is worthy information, and it needs to get out to people."

I said, "Brother, why did you tell us what you did at the board meeting?"

He did not tell me why, but I knew why. He was asking our church to give him \$5,000; and if he was going to get \$5,000 out of us, he knew what he had to say, because we have a reputation of which book we believe.

That is crooked, and don't you be like that! Do not ever get out in the ministry and do something like that! Do not do that ever about anything, and especially about something this important!

I would rather be called names and take my stand by faith that God is going to do what he says he is going to do about his bible and let the chips fall where they will. I am going to face the Lord Jesus Christ one day at the Judgment Seat of Christ, so the best thing that I can do is stand by the Book. If I am wrong about this issue, when I get there I will say, "Lord, I was standing by the book that you gave me, and if it is wrong, then I am wrong."

If you cannot do that, then you do not need to be preaching! You need to do something else.

We are trying to decipher and learn in the word of God what God's design is in the bible so that we can have faith in what God said he is going to do.

od's word is preserved in copies of the original. That is the process of preservation. His design is to preserve it; his promise is that he will preserve it. The process of preservation is to preserve it in copies.

Turn to Exodus 34. Moses destroyed the original autographs. He threw them down and destroyed them. Exodus 34:1,2 – “AND the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount.”

Exodus 34:27,28 – “And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”

Moses then comes down from the mountain, and he takes those commandments that he wrote on those stones, and he preserves them. The Lord gives him the copies of the original autographs, which he destroyed. He takes the initiative and provides a means whereby this copy might be preserved.

Deuteronomy 10:1,2 – “AT that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.”

Moses gets the copies, and he puts them in the ark – that little box that they carried around with them.

Deuteronomy 10:3-5 – “And I made an ark *of* shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.”

Moses preserved the tablets, and he has a box to put them in.

If you go through the book of Deuteronomy, you will see that that box is kept by the Levites, and that word of God is kept in that box.

Deuteronomy 31:9 – “And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.” Moses is writing the books of Genesis to Deuteronomy. As he writes them down, he puts them in the box, and they keep them there.

Deuteronomy 31:24-26 – “And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.” That ark is called “the ark of the testimony” over and over again in the bible. The reason it is called “the ark of the testimony” is because the word of God, the testimony of God, is in that box.

Turn to Deuteronomy 17, and let’s notice how they make copies of the contents of that box for the people and for the kings. God Almighty wants them to preserve his word. He sets up a mechanism where it is written and preserved in their midst, and they do not just carry it around in that box. They keep the original autographs in the box for safekeeping, but that is not the only place that that word of God is. They are not just carrying that box around without anybody having access to its contents. They are making copies of what is in that box and people have those copies.

Deuteronomy 17:14-17 – “When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that *are* about me; Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: (from the LORD) neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.” He is not to go multiply weapons, women, or wealth. He is to stay away from that stuff.

Deuteronomy 17:18 – “And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, (notice this carefully), that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of *that which is* before the priests the Levites.” In other words, he goes in there and gets that testimony, (that original manuscript), and he is to write himself a copy of the word of God. When he sits on the throne, he is to have his own personal copy of the bible.

Turn to 2 Kings 11. (The priest, Jehoiada, is doing this.) Verse 12 – “And he brought forth the king’s son, and put the crown upon him, and *gave him* the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.” He gave the king’s son his own personal copy of the word of God.

Did you ever wonder why people give other people a copy of the bible when something special happens? They have good tradition and history for that action. They have a good precedent for that.

Do you know what they gave that king when he got on the throne? They did not give him a copy of “Field and Stream”, or a copy of “The Wall Street Journal.” They gave him a copy of the bible, and they expected that fellow to read it. God said that when that king sits on that throne, you make sure he has his own personal copy of the book.

Deuteronomy 17:19 – “And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life.” That fellow is supposed to have his own copy of the bible, and he is supposed to be able to read it everyday. He is supposed to take that bible and read it and study it.

Continuing with Deuteronomy 17:19,20 – “that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, *to the right hand, or to the left*: to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.”

The king is to have his own copy of the word of God. It is the copies that are important. If the original manuscripts were all that was important to God, he would have told him to get the original manuscripts, which were available at that time. If the original manuscripts were the issue, he would have said, “Preserve that original manuscript and when the king comes, give it to him.” But, the copies are the issue. God Almighty wants his word copied and distributed.

The copies of those original manuscripts are just as reliable as the originals. They are in no way inferior to the original. Deuteronomy 17:19,20 makes it very clear that God Almighty will bless the king for following the copy, because the copy is as much the word of God as the original. When he follows the copy, he is keeping all the words of this law. So, the copies are in no way inferior to the original manuscripts. God wanted the copies made and the copies were made.

By the way, the king was not the only one that got copies. Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9, and you will see that the common ordinary Israelite had the word of God; and he was required to memorize it, and to learn it, and to teach it to his children. They all had copies. Every Israelite did not have his own personal copy – maybe there was one copy per family. But, the king had his own personal copy.

Look at Psalm 19, the Psalm of David. Verses 7-9 – “The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.” That fellow is reading copies of the word of God; he is not reading the bible in its original manuscripts. He says that it is perfect; it is right; it is clean; it is true and righteous. It is pure. That is some testimony for a bunch of copies!

When you read what David is saying, you will see that he has his own copy of the bible. Psalm 119:97-100 – “O how love I thy law! *it is* my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they *are* ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.” David said, “I have more wisdom than experience can give me; I have more wisdom that education can give me, because I am in the book.”

Turn to Proverbs 25:1 – “THESE *are* also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.” Do you see what these men did? They chose a copy of Solomon’s Proverbs, and they put it in the bibles. They chose the copy over the original writings.

God will preserve his word in copies, and the copies are as reliable as the originals. They are not inferior in any way when God is involved in making it his word.

There are two things that you want to remember.

1. God wants his word copied. He wants copies made of his word. Psalm 68:11 – The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published *it* (put it out).” They spread it abroad. God wants his word published abroad.
2. God’s design is to preserve his word in copies. The issue is not just that he wants everybody to have it, but that is the process and method whereby he will preserve it. These copies are accurate and reliable.

Daniel 9 and 10 are two tremendous chapters in the study of prophecy and the time schedule for Israel.

Daniel 9:1,2 – “IN the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”

Daniel has copies of God’s word that were written prior to the Babylonian Captivity. The Babylonian Captivity is prophesied, in the book of Jeremiah and in 2 Chronicles, to last seventy years. Daniel has copies of what God wrote down through Jeremiah. Jeremiah told those guys to go over to Babylon and buy a house and get a farm so they could make a living, because they would be over there until they died. He told them that they would not return to Jerusalem in their lifetime, but it would be their children or grandchildren that would finally get to come home. He told them to just go over there and prosper and enjoy themselves. Jeremiah told them how long they were going to be there. Daniel has that book of Jeremiah, and he reads it and understands that it will be seventy years.

Daniel does not just have the book of Jeremiah. Daniel 9:11,12 – “Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that *is written* in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words.” Daniel has the words that God wrote to him through Moses. He has a copy of that Mosaic Law. He has copies of the books of Genesis to Deuteronomy.

Do you see the importance he puts on it? He said, “And he hath confirmed his words.” Daniel assumed that the very words that he was reading were right and that they were God’s words.

Gabriel comes to Daniel in Daniel 9:21; and if you read down through the end of chapter 9, you will see the seventy weeks that are given to Daniel.

Daniel 10:1 – “IN the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, (that is 2 years after Daniel 9:1), a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.” God gives Daniel a revelation here.

Daniel 10:18,19 – “Then there came again and touched me *one* like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace *be* unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.” The man talking to him is the angel Gabriel.

Verses 20 and 21 – “Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and *there is* none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.” The angel’s statement about the bible in verse 21 is that the bible is “the scripture of truth”, meaning the writings do not have any error in them. There is no error in truth.

Do you know what the angel that came from God said? He said just what God sent him to say. When you hear what an angel from God says about it, you understand God’s viewpoint about it.

God’s viewpoint is that the copies of the word of God that Daniel had could be called the scripture of truth, meaning that they were without error. God Almighty is preserving his word in copies without error.

Turn to Zechariah chapter 1. Zechariah was a companion of Ezra who first went back to the land.

Zechariah 1:1,2 – “IN the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers.” He has a message for the Jews after the captivity.

Zechariah 1:5,6 – “Your fathers, where *are* they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? (They are all dead and gone.) But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.” He is saying, “Your fathers and the prophets are all dead and gone, but my words (the individual words – not the concepts, not the ideas) live forever.”

The words do not just live forever, but they are among the people; people have them. The people possess them. These people have copies of what the prophets said, and the copies have the same authority as the original words. Those words and copies take hold of the fathers and these people, and it has happened to them just like the original said it would happen to them.

The final absolute authority that is in the originals is maintained in the copies that they have, and the copies are out among the people.

When God talks about preserving his word, he is not talking about preserving it in heaven in a copy that nobody has access to. He is talking about preserving it in a physical existence in the earth where people can hold it.

I am just giving you a multiplicity of verses that demonstrate to you the fact that the process of preservation is just a multiplicity of copies of his word that are accurate and reliable and accessible to you.

Here are the Lord Jesus Christ's statements about it. Matthew 24:15 – "When ye therefore shall see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)."

We just read about Daniel, the prophet in Daniel 9. Daniel the prophet lives in approximately 600 BC (550 BC or something like that). Jesus Christ shows up and dies on the cross. He is standing in the shadow of the cross speaking. He says, "When you see the abomination spoken of by Daniel the prophet, (that is in the tribulation period in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel). Then, he says, "whoso readeth, let him understand."

Matthew 24:16 – "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains." Jesus Christ is saying, "You can read what Daniel the prophet wrote down in 550 or 600 BC, right now when I am here with you in 30 AD." But, that is not all. There will be some people 3½ years into the tribulation that will also read the same thing, so God Almighty has to preserve his word up until that time for someone to read Daniel 9 and understand what they are reading. He is talking about preserving his word through time and through history into the future out there.

Jesus Christ's attitude about it was that God Almighty was going to provide the word of God for people to read, not to hear about, not to understand the content of the message, but to read the words on the page of Daniel 9 in the tribulation period, which has to be out there in the future from today. That is preservation in copies.

The word of God is preserved in copies because it says in Matthew 24, "Then let them which be in Judaea flee when they read the thing." He is talking to a whole bunch of people that are reading this.

Nobody has the original manuscript of Daniel 9? The only other way to figure that is that somebody will discover the original manuscript during the tribulation, and they will start reading it then. If you believe that, isn't it a whole lot easier for you to believe that God will preserve his word in copies?

Luke 4:17 is a passage that we have been over before. Jesus goes into Nazareth, and he goes into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stands up to read. Verse 17 – "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written." Then he quotes Isaiah 61.

uke 4:21 – “And he began to say unto them. This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” He is talking about what is written down on the page. He is reading a copy of the book of Isaiah, and he calls it scripture; and he says, “It is fulfilled in your ears.” If the original manuscripts were the only issue, Jesus Christ would not be telling the truth there. That copy can be fulfilled in their ears, which means the very words of God are being fulfilled there.

Folks, the authority, and the accuracy, and the infallibility of the bible extend far past the originals. It also goes into generations of copies, which is why Christ can hold it and call it scripture.

What is scripture according to the bible definition? The scripture is “God-breathed.” It is the words God dictated to be written down on a page. And in Luke 4, he said, “These are them.” These are accurate, reliable copies.

Luke 4:4 – “And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, THAT MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD OF GOD.” That expression “it is written” is in the perfect tense, which is a tense in the Greek language that means it is accomplished in the past, but the results continue on to the present. He is saying that it stands written right this minute. What God wrote down in the past continues to exist into the very present.

Turn to Acts 8 and notice that there were at least two copies of the book of Isaiah floating around, because another one shows up right here. Acts 8:26-28 – “And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.” This man obviously has a copy of Isaiah. What did he do? Did he go up to Nazareth and steal one from up there? You know better than that! He had his own copy!

There are at least two copies of Isaiah around for people to read. There is one in Nazareth, and then this man in Acts 8 has one.

Acts 8:29 – “Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.” The Holy Spirit is going to use the copy of Isaiah that he has.

Acts 8:32 – “The place of the scripture which he read was this, HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO THE SLAUGHTER.” The Holy Spirit calls it scripture, and he is talking about a copy of the book of Isaiah.

Acts 8:35-38 – “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their way*, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here* is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.”

The sentence “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37) is left out of every modern translation on the market today. They either leave it out completely or they put it in brackets, meaning that they do not think it should be there, but they do not have the courage of their convictions. They do that just so you know that they do not think it should really be there.

That verse is attacked simply on the basis of the fact that that verse is a verse that caused a man to have faith, and that man’s faith was generated by a copy of the scripture. “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” If faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God and this eunuch is reading a copy of the book of Isaiah and that copy generates faith in that man’s heart, then what does that say about the copy of the book you are reading? It says that it is the word of God, and Acts 8:37 is the verse that indicates that is a reality.

It is no wonder to me that they attack that verse and leave it out.

Notice in Acts 15 that there are copies of the word of God in every city in the territory. They are talking to Paul about the Jews. Acts 15:21 – “For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.” They read “him” every sabbath day in every city. There are copies of the word of God scattered all over the territory, and those copies are scripture. They are considered authoritative by Jesus Christ, and by Philip, and by the Holy Spirit, and by the Apostle Paul.

Acts 17:2 – “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.” He opens up the word of God, and he does not question it and say, “We are happy that we have a fairly accurate reliable copy. He does not say, “We have God’s word here, but I have to be sure that you understand which verse is really the word of God and which verse is not.”

The indication is that Paul, in Acts 17:2, used Daniel 9 to prove and demonstrate that Jesus was the Christ. We cannot get into that in this lesson, but we will when we study 2 Thessalonians.

Did you know that the book of Daniel is one of the most disputed books in the Old Testament as to its authenticity and its genuineness? Sir Robert Anderson wrote a book entitled Daniel and the Critic’s Den, and his conclusion was that Daniel faired better in the lions den than he did in the critics den.

It is interesting that Jesus validates the copy of the word of God, and Paul also validates it.

Acts 18:24 – “And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.” The scriptures are down in North Africa as well as up in Greece.

There are bibles in the Mediterranean Sea, the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, and Jerusalem, and Turkey, and Greece, and Italy, and North Africa, and Alexandria, and Paul in Ephesus and Colossi, and Thessalonica, and Corinth. As Paul travels, people tell him

that people are reading the bible. Apollos travels all around, and he has a bible, and he is mighty in the scripture. The bible is all over that territory, and the bibles are copies.

I am going over these verses because I want you to see this. I realize that some of this may seem repetitious for you. But, I want to pound into your understanding and into your frame of reference the fact that God has preserved his word, and the process is through copies multiplied and scattered all over the territory. That is the way I want you to understand it without a doubt.

2 Timothy 3:14,15 – “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; And that from a child thou hast known the holy (set apart) scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Timothy knew the scriptures that God set apart for himself. Timothy had copies of the bible.

Paul says in Romans 1:2, “(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.)”

God says in Psalm 60:6, “Got hath spoken in his holiness.” That is why you call it a holy bible. They are the holy words of God, and these are scriptures that God has set apart for himself.

2 Timothy 3:16 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” The scripture, in this passage, is a reference to copies of the word of God, not to the original manuscripts, (not in the context anyway).

If the inspiration is in the copies, that is a rough verse if you have an “unscriptural” definition of inspiration or preservation.

We started out studying inspiration, and I hope you understand now why I pounded that into you. If you have an unscriptural definition of inspiration, that verse is a problem to you. You cannot believe what that verse says if you believe that inspiration is just what happens to the man when he writes some things down, and if you do not understand that inspiration has to do with the words God puts on a page. That is the issue in inspiration.

If you have an unscriptural definition of inspiration, you have problems because that passage says that the inspiration is in a bunch of copies of the holy word of God.

If you do not understand the doctrine of preservation, you will never understand how the copies can be God-breathed.

In the next semester, we will study some issues regarding the Septuagint, and I will give you some evidence that the Septuagint is a hoax. The scholars and all the commentaries say that the Septuagint was written in 250 BC and that Christ, Peter, Philip, Paul, Timothy and everybody was using the Greek translation, not the Hebrew Bible.

If that is true, that makes it even worse because you have a translation called scripture. And they get mad at you if you say that you believe your English translation is inspired. Yet, by their own standards, they have Paul saying that Timothy's Greek translation is inspired.

If a fellow tells you that he believes that is the Septuagint, then you really have him over the barrel.

I personally do not believe that the Septuagint is reliable and trustworthy, and I will try to demonstrate that to you in future lessons.

I want you to get this straight. God's design is to preserve his word. The process of the preservation is in copies. He is going to preserve his word through a multiplicity of accurate reliable copies that are available to all believers and which are as authoritative as the originals.

Listen people, reliable copies are available to you. Therefore, you do not have to go out and restore the original manuscripts. Thus, you do not need the textual critics and their philosophy of restoration – their human viewpoint. All you have to do is take God at his word instead of pulling your hair out and trying to explain it. Just believe what God said and rest on it.

In the next lesson we will begin to study the people that God used to perform this process of preservation. There is a specific and special group of people that God has chosen to execute the process.

Your memory verses are Psalm 19:7-9. That will be the only memory verse because it is a long passage. You may want to notice in that passage that there are six titles given to the bible; there are six attributes given to the bible; there are six effects that are produced by the bible.

MSS 101 – 12
(Test)

On a separate sheet of properly headed paper answer the following questions.

1. The doctrine of plenary, verbal inspiration assures us that God included in the bible all of the necessary things he wants us to know and excluded everything else. True or False?
2. Cite and explain two passages that teach that the process of revelation and inspiration has been completed.
3. Demonstrate from scripture that the Old Testament canon was already fixed at the time of Christ.
4. Explain the make-up of the Jewish bible as cited by Christ in Luke 24:44.
5. What was the position of the Apocrapha in the Jewish Bible?
6. What basic threat does the Charismatic Movement pose to the written word of God?
7. Explain how 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 teaches that revelation has ceased.
8. List three reasons for God giving us His word in written form.
9. How does 2 Timothy 3:15,16 teach that inspiration and preservation go hand-in-hand?
10. Demonstrate from scripture that God has promised to preserve His word through time and history.
11. What was Jesus Christ's attitude toward the word of God?
12. What is "textual criticism?"
13. The "original manuscripts" have always been the main issue with God in locating and identifying His word. True or False?
Give scriptures.
14. By what process has God designed to preserve His word?
15. Demonstrate that process from scripture. Cite at least six passages.

MSS 101 – 13

Thus far, we learned that God has promised to preserve his word. We saw that the process of preservation is through a multiplicity of accurate, reliable copies of the word, and that these copies are as authoritative as the originals themselves.

In this lesson, we will move from the issue that God preserves His word through a multiplicity of copies into God's design behind the process. In other words, we will discuss the people that He uses to preserve His word.

God always had a chosen and appointed group of people to copy and to preserve His word. In the preservation of the Old Testament, there is a distinct group of people that are charged with the responsibility of preserving and copying out God's word.

The same is true in the New Testament.

Romans 3:1,2 – “WHAT advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” In other words, the word of God was given to the nation Israel. One of the reasons, and purposes, and functions for which God chose the nation Israel was to have a vehicle through which to give His word. He separated that nation out, and one of that nation's functions was to hold, and to have the word of God. God had a group of people to communicate the word to, to entrust the word to, who would preserve that word through time.

God has always had a certain class of people chosen and charged with the job of collecting together his word, (collating it and laying it out), and copying it.

In the next lesson, we will go over the issue of the people in the New Testament; but in this lesson, I want you to notice the issue of preservation in the Old Testament. I want to establish the fact in the scripture and demonstrate how God had a group of people doing this job for him; and as a result, you will see his design in what is going on.

Look at Deuteronomy 31. We went over this passage in previous lessons, so I will not go down through the entire chapter. We saw how God always took the initiative. God gave Moses the commandments, and Moses destroyed them. Then, God Almighty took the initiative to reproduce them and rewrite them. He made another copy of them. God is the one who took the initiative in preservation. Preservation is not something that God leaves for man to do because man wants to do it. It is God's design, and His purpose, and His program.

Deuteronomy 31:24-26 – “And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.” Moses took the initial section of the word of God when it is completed there,

and he put it in the ark for keeping. He committed that text that he began to write to the priest, (the Levites). Those Levites were charged with the responsibility of keeping the book.

Moses did not put the word in the ark because he no longer wanted it. He was not trying to get rid of it. Neither did Moses put the word in the ark because he knew he would die, and he wanted it kept safe. If Moses was just worried about the fact that he would die, what do you think he would have done with it? Who would he have given it to? He surely would have given it to Joshua because Joshua would be his successor.

But, Moses did not give it to Joshua, rather, he put it in the ark, and he committed it to the Levites to take care of it. Moses put the word in the ark because God's design was not just that Joshua had the word, but that there would be a group of people selected out and charged with the responsibility of taking care of His word. The Levites took care of the word of God.

Look at Deuteronomy 10:1,2 – “AT that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.” God told Moses to put them in the ark. Do you see that in verse 2? Moses did not just dream that up, but that was God's design. God told Moses what to do with the word after he wrote it.

Deuteronomy 10:3 – “And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand.”

In verse 4, the LORD wrote on the tablets.

Deuteronomy 10:5 – “And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.” Moses did exactly what God said – he put the tables in the ark.

Verses 8,9 – “At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, (why did he separate them?), to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day. Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD *is* his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.” God said to put the word in the ark, and then He raises up an entire group of people to take care of the ark.

He also takes care of the people according to verse 9.

God sets up an entire tribe of people to do the job of preserving his word. It is important that you see that. The Old Testament is to be preserved by the tribe of Levi, especially the issue of the priest. One of the primary functions has to do with preserving the word of God and teaching the word of God.

The word was to be taught and studied by the people. God never designed to preserve His word by writing it and putting it up on a library shelf somewhere, just like they did not put the

word in the ark just to put it away. They put the copy there for safekeeping, because the Levites had the responsibility to take care of that ark, and to take care of the book that was in it, and then to teach that book and reproduce that book so the people would have copies of it.

Deuteronomy 31:9 – “And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.” Moses writes it, and he gives it to them.

Deuteronomy 31:10-12 – “And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that *is* within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law.”

If you go on down through that passage, you will see the issue of preservation very clearly.

Verse 19 – “Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.” The idea is that the word is to be copied, and it is to be taught to the people.

There is a group of people, an entire tribe in Israel (the Levites), chosen by God and separated from all of their brethren and given the responsibility, among other things, of keeping that book, and copying that book, and preserving that book, and teaching that book to the nation. Look at 2 Chronicles 15:3 – “Now for a long season Israel *hath been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.” The purpose of the priesthood was to teach the people. They taught them doctrine out of the word of God just as they had the sacrifices and all of those things. All of those things taught doctrine to the people.

(Eventually, the priests forgot the doctrine and kept the ritual. Where have you seen that before? You can see that every Sunday in our day, if you go to the wrong place.)

The function of that priest was to teach the word of God to the people, and teaching it preserves it for the people.

Look at Malachi. That verse in 2 Chronicles, and this one we are about to look at in Malachi, gives the negative charge to Israel. Israel (the priesthood) failed to do what God told them to do in teaching the word of God. When you see the charge against them, you will see what they should have been doing.

Malachi 2:4-7 – “And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him *for* the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest’s lips should

keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he *is* the messenger of the LORD of hosts.”

Do you see what the function of the priest was? That priest’s lips should keep knowledge.

If you wanted knowledge from God, and if you wanted to know what the word of God says, that priest’s job was to preserve that and have it ready for you when you needed it.

Malachi 2:7 says, “...and they should seek the law at his mouth.” The people came to that priest to get the word of God. That man’s job was to always have and maintain that word of God for the people.

Malachi 2:8 – “But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Turn to Micah and you will see that the priests got off the track. They were not doing what they should were supposed to be doing.

The verses we just read in Malachi are clear about the function of the priest. He was to maintain the law and the word of God and have it available for the people at all times. The people should have been able to go to the priest to get the word of God.

My friend, that was not just going to him and asking him to read the word of God to them. We looked at too many passages by now that you should know that those people had copies of the bible for themselves. There were copies of the Old Testament all over the world out there, and making those copies was the priest’s function. It was their job.

Micah 3:8-11 – “But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin. Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, *Is* not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.” They blame it on the Lord.

People do things for fame, and for money, and for position, and for reputation, and yet they are always real pious to say, “*Is* not the Lord among us?” That’s what these guys are doing in Micah.

Micah 3:12 – “Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.” God will destroy them.

These priests became a part of Satan’s policy of evil against the word of God. They became a part of Satan’s policy of corruption – corrupting the word of God.

You can see his policy of corruption in operation there when you see the judges of the people doing it for money, and the priests teaching for money, and the preachers preaching for money, not for the Lord.

Look at Jeremiah 36. That scribe had a special room all for himself in the king's palace. Jeremiah 36:12 – "Then he went down into the king's house, into the scribe's chamber."

What was the man of God doing in the king's palace? That scribe was God's man, and he was supposed to be copying that book, and taking care of that book, and teaching it. What in the world was he doing in the king's palace? He was doing it for money! That fellow belonged down in the temple. He did not belong in the king's palace.

Jeremiah 36:21,22 – "So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him."

Now, the king begins to cut up the word of God in verse 23. He tore it up with his penknife. He destroyed it.

The king destroyed the word of God, and yet, he had a scribe living in his house with a special room for himself.

That is the policy of evil.

When you begin to study about the corruptions of the word of God that are on the market today, look at the origin of that corruption. It is not always the people involved. A lot of times the people do not know any differently.

I have to confess to you that there was a time when I did not know anything about these things. People who I thought knew what the truth was told me certain things. I was told that a certain bible was right, and I went around telling people that it was the right bible. (I came to find out later that I was wrong.) I used to tell people that the American Standard Version was the best one on the market. I said that because my uncle went to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and I thought he should know if he had been to seminary.

Certainly they know what is right in the cemetery (I mean seminary).

Well, one day I began to talk to somebody about the bible versions. I said, "Yes, but you do not understand because you have never been to school." I said, "Your problem is that you need to go get some more education. My uncle Jim said the American Standard is the best because they told him in school, and the professors said it."

This dear little saint of God sat me down, and instead of kicking me in the shins and telling me that I was reprobate and a heretic, she just cried. She cried big old tears, and she said, "If you would just read this little thing."

I said, "I do not want to read that nonsense. That crazy nut never studied anything!"

She would just continue to cry, until finally one day she provoked me into reading what this man wrote.

Do you know what I found out? I found out that who I thought that "who" was over there did not make any difference. I began to get some verses together, and I began to see some distinct differences between the American Standard Bible and the King James Bible. When I laid those differences out side by side, I knew in my heart which one was right and which one was wrong. Nobody had to give me a lot of theological jargon.

I tried to explain some of that stuff that I believed away, but you just get so far with that, and then your conscience will not allow you to go any farther.

I am trying to tell you that the motive of the person that is telling you the wrong thing is not always like the motives of those priests in the Old Testament. Somewhere along the line some people get duped. When you go back into the history, and when you go back and find the real roots of the error that is being taught, you find out that money and gain and status and pride are involved.

Now, that does not mean that everybody that you meet that has the wrong kind of bible in their hands is proud and out for the money. Do not put that kind of nonsense in your mind. But, it means that the system and the doctrine that they are propagating have those things involved in them.

However, you should love those people enough to tell them the truth in love, and try to reach them with love.

But, back behind that evil, you see that policy. Then, an unsuspected person gets in it, and then he begins to get the gain. The more gain he gets out of that system the harder it is to give up that gain when he sees the truth.

When you are poor, and you do not have a ministry, you can be real brave. But it is different when you have your life invested in something, and there is a pension plan at stake, and an insurance policy, and all of those things.

You do not ever want to get hooked up with somebody that will own you like that. They try to own you with insurance policies.

I sat in a meeting recently with a group of men, and they said to this one man, "Why don't you belong to this organization?"

The man said, "I cannot because my convictions will not let me."

We talked a little while longer and found out the real reason. He was a 60-year-old pastor that had been preaching for thirty years, and he could not afford to buy health insurance.

I know what that is like. You get out in the ministry, and you cannot buy everything that you want to buy. You work your fingers to the bone, and you still cannot do it.

I did not have insurance when my son was born. I paid those bills for years.

Before we moved to Chicago, my youngest son was in the hospital for a long period of time. We did not know if he was going to live or not.

I did not have any insurance at that time, and it was not because I was slothful and not working. I was not just lazy and not providing for my family. We could not afford the insurance, despite the fact that I worked for myself painting.

I taught bible classes four nights a week, and I pastored a church, and I taught on the radio five days a week. We were in the ministry, and I worked about 15 to 18 hours a day constantly.

The fact that we did not have health insurance did not mean we were being lazy. We just had to give up some things in order to have the ministry. If I was going to have the ministry, I could not spend a lot of time painting in order to make a lot of money. I made enough to pay my bills and that was it, because I did all these other things in the ministry. We willingly did that, and the Lord takes care of you.

When you are in that situation, it is easy for somebody to come along and say, "I can get you some insurance. All you have to do is come and be a part of what I am doing."

The temptation is tough sometimes, and the same temptations come along that they will endure in the tribulation concerning taking the mark of the beast. During the tribulation, people will probably say, "You mean you do not love your baby, or your family enough to take this mark?"

You think all of that stuff hasn't come yet, but it has, and you will face it when you get out in the ministry.

Because of that kind of pressure from the system, those priests in the Old Testament got hooked up in the policy of corrupting the word of God. The way you wind up corrupting God's word is money. Money will get you every time – the allure and the pull.

Sometimes it is not somebody offering you money straight out, but sometimes it is position and status and those kinds of things.

In the Old Testament, the priest should have been preserving the word, but they messed up.

You may say, "If they messed up, does that mean God did not execute his design?"

That is not what that means. Look at Micah 1:1 – "THE word of the LORD that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw

concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.” Hezekiah was a great man of God, and he was a king of Israel. He had faithful scribes.

Some of the scribes were unfaithful. We read about them in Micah 3. They taught for money, and they corrupted the word of God.

But, Hezekiah had a great group of faithful scribes. Hezekiah was a man who wrote portions of the word of God. He was a man of God who was responsible, in large measure, for much of the collecting together of the word of God. He had a great interest in the bible, and he had some faithful scribes, and he made sure of that.

Thus, alongside the policy of evil to corrupt the word of God runs God’s policy of preserving His word through faithful scribes and priests.

Turn to Isaiah 36. Rabshakeh came and threatened them and told them that the Syrians would wipe them out. Rabshakeh threatens Hezekiah and Israel.

Isaiah 36:22 – “Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, that *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.” They tell him the threats.

Notice the scribe is there. This scribe is God’s man.

Isaiah 37:1,2 – “AND it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.” Isaiah the prophet prophesied and functioned during the reign of Hezekiah. Isaiah, along with a great number of other godly men, was in a situation where much of the word of God was being produced. Thus, there is a great host of interest.

I read that passage to you because these were godly men, and Hezekiah had faithful scribes with him.

Proverbs 25:1 – “THESE *are* also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.” Hezekiah had these men copying the word of God. He had these men functioning in their job of copying, and laying out, and collecting together the scripture – the word of God.

Hezekiah had a guild of scribes. They were godly faithful men that were recognized by the crowd.

In Jeremiah 36, in the king’s chamber, the king was trying to crush and corrupt the word of God. However, Hezekiah was a godly king that wanted to see the word of God prosper and flourish.

My point is that there was a faithful group of people, (even when the priesthood was apostate), who collected, and copied, and distributed the word of God.

For example, King David, had his very own scribe. I say that to you so you understand that this was an important function and office – an official governmental position that these men had. I will put it like this *They had the Authorized Version*. In other words, they had a situation where they were recognized by what they were doing, and it was something that was authorized.

2 Samuel 8:15-17 – “And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people. And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Seraiah was the scribe.” David had a scribe involved in all of the other governmental functions that he had.

When David’s son, Solomon, set up his reign, he also had a scribe. In fact, he had more than one scribe.

1 Kings 4:1-3 – “SO king Solomon was king over all Israel. And these were the princes which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the priest, Elihoreph and Ahiah, the sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder.” My point is that these men had scribes.

Scribes were God’s idea, and they were God’s appointed method of copying and getting His word out.

Let’s read 2 Chronicles 29. This goes back to Hezekiah’s time. Verse 30 – “Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.” The “words of David” is the book of Psalm.

What are the “words of Asaph the seer”? That is also the book of Psalm. Asaph wrote many of the Psalms, as well as David.

These guys sang the word of God in the worship services. They sang praises with gladness and bowed their heads and worshipped. You had a situation where they were singing the psalms and praising God; and the word of God, involved in the function and activity of the priest, is being preserved.

Let’s look at Jeremiah 8. Jeremiah prophesied before the Babylonian Captivity hit, and he says in verses 4-8, “Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return? Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. I hearkened and heard, *but* they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle. Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the

LORD. How do ye say, *We are wise*, and the law of the LORD *is* with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he *it*; the pen of the scribes *is* in vain.”

He is saying, “You folks claim to be wise, and you claim to know the word of God, but if you are so smart, why don’t you know that judgment is coming? The birds know about the season change. If you guys are so smart and know so much about that bible, why don’t you know that the wrath of God is fixing to fall on the nation Israel? Why are you standing up saying, ‘peace and safety, and nothing is going to happen’?”

If they had known Deuteronomy 29-32, (about all of those curses and things that were going to happen to the nation of Israel), they would have known God Almighty was fixing to clean their plow. But, they did not know that.

He said at the end of verse 8 – “Lo, certainly in vain made he *it*; the pen of the scribes *is* in vain.” The point is that the word of God did not have any affect on them. They had it but they did not pay any attention to it.

Notice that he talks about “the pen of the scribes.” He is talking about copies. It was a situation where they had copies of the law, but the problem is that they were not reading them and following them. They were not paying any attention to them. They rejected them.

Jeremiah 8:9 – “The wise *men* are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom *is* in them?” That is a good verse to learn. They rejected the word of the LORD and therefore, they do not have any wisdom. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

Verse 9 calls it “the word of God”, and verse 8 is “the pen of the scribes”. They have copies. That scribe was functioning as a copyist of the word of God.

Let me show you a great example of a scribe in the bible. Ezra returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonian Captivity with Zerubbabel. Ezra 7:6 – “This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, (in other words, Ezra was an expert instructor in the word of God), which the LORD God of Israel had given.” He was down in Babylon for 70 years, and Ezra had that word of God in Babylon. Those guys took the word of God with them.

In the last lesson, we looked at some passages in Daniel and saw that Daniel learned, by books, the length of the captivity. Daniel had the word of God over there (at least Chronicles and Jeremiah).

Now Ezra goes and then comes back to Jerusalem, and when he comes, he is an expert instructor and teacher in the book. He had the book over there to study.

According to verse 6, God Almighty gives His word, and He preserves it.

The end of Ezra 7:6 says, “and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.”

Verses 10-12 – “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments. Now this *is* the copy of the letter that king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, *even* a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel. Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect *peace*, and at such a time. “

Ezra 7:21 – “And I, *even* I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which *are* beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily.” Do you see how he has that title of scribe every time he shows up?

(By the way, verse 21 contains every letter in the alphabet except the letter “j”.)

Ezra 7:27 – “Blessed *be* the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put *such a thing* as this in the king’s heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem: And hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king’s mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.”

Ezra was strengthened by the hand of the LORD to do the job that God gave him to do. God Almighty had scribes. He had His faithful men to preserve His word, and the job got done.

In the New Testament, we saw how the Lord Jesus Christ recognizes that. God Almighty sets up the standard and there is a divine “superintendency” over this design. He sets up the standard and His hand is on the working, and the process, and the functioning of it. God runs the entire thing, and He does not leave anything to chance.

It is an article of faith to believe that what God sets up, He is powerful enough to see that it is executed.

Now, the Old Testament is preserved through the nation Israel. A particular group, or tribe, or chosen people in the nation Israel are given the responsibility of preserving the word of God – the tribe of Levite, the priests, the scribes. Their responsibility is to preserve God’s word for the Nation and the Nation for the nations.

When you come to the New Testament, with the fall of Israel, the design does not change, but the people change. When you come to Paul in the New Testament, you have the fall of Israel, and the people change. There is a different class and a different group of people today charged with the responsibility, but the design is the same. The design is that God will preserve His word through a multiplicity of copies by a class of people who do that.

In other words, I am trying to get you to see that the word will be preserved by the dynamic of people handling it, not in one copy sitting on a bookshelf for 500 or 1000 years. That is not the way God preserves His word. He preserves His word by it being in the hands of a certain kind of people, and those people are charged with the responsibility; and under the divine “superintendency” of God Almighty’s Spirit, they function and execute God’s purpose.

MSS 101 – 14

I want to do something in this lesson that is sort of a break in what we have been doing. In the last few lessons, we learned and saw the issue of the process of preservation – God designed to preserve His word in a multiplicity of copies that are accurate and reliable.

In the last lesson, we saw that God designed a process whereby he uses a certain class, and group of people, to preserve his word. He has a group of people that do the job.

We saw that God had a group of people in the Old Testament who preserved His word.

In the next lesson, we will get involved with the issue of the people in the New Testament. I will identify them for you and talk about them.

But, in this lesson, I want to take a break from that and illustrate the fact that God is using the people by noticing references in the Old Testament to a definite book that runs all the way through the Old Testament. From the time of Moses onward, there is a book, and that book is constantly being written in and added to. It is being copied and distributed among the people. That book is what we call “The Bible.”

There was a time when the bible was not complete. There was a time when the Old Testament was not complete. They just had certain books in the Old Testament and yet “The Book” was recognized. There is a clear witness through the scripture about that book.

We will just go through these passages so you can see that throughout the Old Testament there is a book; and it is constantly being written in, and kept up to date with the word of God. That book is constantly being copied and distributed among the people so that the whole earth is filled with it.

There is an authoritative book, and you see it all the way through the Old Testament.

Look at Exodus 17. In this passage, you have the beginning, or the birth, of the bible as a written book. Exodus 17:14 – “And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.” That was the first time instructions were given to Moses to begin to write this information down. Notice that the written record is authorized by the Lord’s command to Moses to write it. He tells him to write it – to put it down in a book.

Moses is not just keeping the annals or a personal diary. Moses is writing a book that God told him to write.

If you remember our studies in inspiration, you will understand that what is going on here is more than just family records, or a journal of some kind, or a diary. This is something that God gave Moses to write down.

It is interesting to me to notice the context in which this passage (the first command to write) is found. Look at Exodus 17:1 – “And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and *there was* no water for the people to drink.”

Do you remember what happened? The people began to complain against Moses.

Exodus 17:5,6 – “And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock of Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.” Moses goes out there and whacks that rock, and the water comes out!

What is water a type of in the bible? It is a type of the Holy Spirit.

In verse 6, that refreshing, life-giving water comes out.

Exodus 17:8 – “Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.” When the water came, then came Amalek. In the bible, Amalek is a type of the flesh. That is true over and over again. As you study Israel’s history, you will see Amalek attack Israel.

If you want to get some real interesting bible study about how the flesh lusteth against the Spirit (Galatians 5:17), and if you want to get some practical illustrations of that, study Amalek and the way he fights against Israel and the way they fight against him in Exodus 17.

If you read Exodus 17:8-13, you will see that there are two weapons that they use against Amalek to win. One is prayer. Moses goes up on the mountain, and when he prays, Joshua, fighting in the valley, prevails. Moses gets tired.

Do you remember when Paul said, “Lifting up holy hands?” That is an illustration of this. Moses held his hands up, and he prayed, and Israel won the battle.

Have you ever stood with your hands up for two hours? Do you know what happens? Your hands drop down little by little.

Well, Aaron and Hur took Moses and they sat him on a rock. They said, “You come over here and sit down Moses, and we will hold your hands up.” Moses does that, and Moses prays, and they prevail.

So, you use prayer against the flesh.

Exodus 17:13 – “And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.” There are two things used there – prayer and the word of God. You use the sword of the Spirit, and prayer, in the conflict.

In verse 14, the LORD told Moses to write it down in a book.

My point is that the giving of the command to begin to write down the word of God is in connection with the hostility of the flesh (Amalek) against the spiritual man (illustrated by Israel getting the water).

Israel does not have a battle with Amalek until that water comes. You do not have a battle with the flesh, folks, until you get saved and regeneration takes place – the coming in of the Holy Spirit and the imparting of the new nature. Then you begin to have a conflict with the flesh.

One of the sure signs of your salvation is that conflict that you now have between the old man and the new man inside of you. That is a sure sign of salvation. If you do not have that conflict, that would be a pretty good sign that you are not saved. You are the only one who knows if you have that conflict. If you can sin and walk in the flesh and there is nothing affected inside of you and there never has been, then you are not saved. If you have that conflict, that is a good testimony about your salvation.

But, the word of God is given in the context of the conflict between Amalek and Israel, which in typology is the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit (the old man and the new man) in the believer. That just tells me that conflict has, ever since, accompanied this book. The bible is given in the context of conflict. When the word of God shows up, the Adversary goes to work to try to eliminate it and to try to get rid of it.

My point in Exodus 17 is that the book starts here.

Notice that Moses continues to write in Exodus 24:3,4 – “And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Exodus 24:7 – “And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Notice that he is writing it in a book. There is a book beginning to be developed.

Exodus 34:27 – “And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.”

Moses wrote this stuff down. God gave him the command and he wrote it.

Numbers 33:1,2 – “THESE *are* the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD: and these *are* their journeys according to their goings out.” He is saying that Moses wrote the book of Numbers.

The New Testament bears testimony to the fact that Moses wrote the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. That is the Torah, the Law (the first five

books of the bible). Those books were compiled together and were made “a” book that was passed down.

Look at Deuteronomy 31. Here is a passage that we have looked at from other perspectives before, but I want you to notice it one more time in relationship to the development of this book.

Deuteronomy 31:24-26 – “And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.”

We saw how the king was supposed to go in and take that book out and make copies of it (Deuteronomy 17).

In Deuteronomy 31, Moses makes an end of the writing. He completed the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Someone may say, “How could Moses have written the last chapter in Deuteronomy when it tells you about his death?”

Well, there are two possible answers.

Number one, maybe Moses did not write it. Maybe Joshua wrote it after Moses died. But, the problem with that is that Deuteronomy 34:1 tells you that the LORD shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan.”

The beginning of verse 4 says, “And the LORD said unto him.”
In verse 5, Moses dies.

Verse 6 says, “And he buried him.” I wonder who the “he” is. That would be God that buried him. Nobody knows, even today, the location of his grave.

Well, Joshua would have been there to be privy of the conversation in verses 1, 2, and 4. But, if Joshua was there and he buried Moses, he would have known where his grave was.

So, either Moses wrote it before his death by inspiration (prophetically writing what was going to happen). Or, Joshua wrote it by inspiration after Moses’ death giving you information that no man could have had except God. Either way, it is inspired.

Thus, you have a book. You have Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy written together, and they form a book.

Now, when Moses dies that book is passed on to Joshua.

Remember this. Copies are being made of that book. We saw that copies were being made in the time of Moses. They were instructed to make copies. There is a book being circulated that is “the” book.

It is just like we say about our bibles, “This is the book.” It is “a” book, but it is “the” book.

And they had one like that in the Old Testament.

Joshua 1:1,2 – “NOW after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Israel.”

The LORD gave Joshua instructions.

Joshua 1:8 – “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”

This book of the law is passed on to Joshua, and that book contains the whole book of the law as it was constituted at that time.

Now the book has information added to it subsequently, but they have it then, and they are to study it and walk in its precepts.

Watch Joshua make some copies of this book. This is one of those little wild stories in the bible that show up every now and then.

Joshua 8:30-34 – “Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal, As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up *any* iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them, (that means they both stood there on an equal basis); half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.”

He got that book out of that ark, and he wrote those things in the stone on that mount.

Joshua 8:35 – “There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.”

He got them all together and he read that book.

If you remember your history back in the book of Deuteronomy, you know that was a very significant place because Moses had done something similar to this with Ebal and Gerizim prior to this.

But, Joshua is making the copy, and that is just another illustration of the fact that copies are being made, and the book is being disseminated out.

Look at Joshua 23:6,7. This is Joshua's exhortation to the elders of Israel before he dies. He tells them in verses 6 and 7, "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom *to the right hand or to the left*; That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear *by them*, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them."

The book is there, and notice that he says, "It is written in 'the' book." He does not refer to "books". He refers to one book that has five parts to it – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

(You have a bible in your possession today, but it has 66 parts. It is one book but it has 66 parts.)

They had one book with five parts, and they recognized it as a unit.

Notice that Joshua writes in the book. He adds to the book that Moses gave him and expands it. Joshua 24:25,26 – "So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the LORD."

Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God. Joshua adds the book of Joshua to the five books of Moses.

Go back to Deuteronomy 31 and notice the similarity to the statement in Joshua and what Moses says about what he wrote. There is a similarity of signature here – a way of signing your name so to speak.

Deuteronomy 31:9 – "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel."

By the way, the book of Deuteronomy is a book that Moses wrote to re-give the whole situation to the nation Israel. When Moses got down to the end of the book, he said, "This is what I'm writing down."

Now, in Joshua 24:26, Joshua said a similar thing. He said, “Joshua wrote these words in the book.” He had the book that he received from Moses; (there is no doubt about what that is), and he wrote some more words in that book. He added to it. Do you get the idea?

Look at 1 Samuel and we will see some other people that did the same thing. At this time, the word of God was not completed, therefore, it was being added to. These men did not look at themselves as writing separate books that have no relationship to the Torah. They did not look at themselves as each man writing a different book – Moses wrote the Torah, and Joshua wrote another book, and Samuel wrote another book, and Isaiah wrote another book; then, someone came along and collected them all together.

That is the human viewpoint that you get when you study about how the bible and the canon was put together. Human viewpoint indicates that a whole bunch of guys just wrote a bunch of books indiscriminately, and then some smart fellow came along and put them all together.

But, Joshua did not say, “I am writing a book for myself.” Rather, he added to “the book” – that one book that was already in existence.

There are a lot of copies of that book around, but it is still one book. They all had the same one; they just had copies of the same one.

Joshua did not see himself as writing a separate book. Joshua did a lot of writing in his life in other books. But here, Joshua sees himself as being authorized to add his part to the book that God Almighty had already written.

(In my opinion, these passages are exciting! It is better than any television show you would ever watch!)

1 Samuel 10:25 – “Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, (he lays down the law about how a kingdom should be set up), and wrote it in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD.”

What book was laid up before the LORD? Deuteronomy 31 – Moses got through with it, and he put it in that ark before the LORD as a testimony.

Do you know what Samuel is adding to that book here? Samuel takes what he writes and adds it to the book, and it is 1 Samuel. Samuel did not just see it as the vast archives of Israel.

In prior lessons, we studied about inspiration, and I showed you passages back in Samuel, and Kings, and Chronicles where they had vast historical archives in Israel. They referred to the book of Gad and all those different books.

Samuel does not say that he made his writings a part of those books, but he said, “I put this book up before the LORD.” There was a certain book that was before the LORD; and if you have been learning the verses, you can identify that book. Deuteronomy 31 tells you that the book that was before the LORD was God’s word. That was the book that Moses wrote.

Joshua added to it, then Samuel added to it, and they viewed themselves as adding to one book. They were writing the bible.

I hope you can grasp this now or at least one day I hope you will be able to grasp the significance of what I am telling you here. I realize that some of you are like little lambs – you lead a guy to the slaughter, and he does not know what is happening to him. I am teaching you material that flies in the face of everything that you will learn out in the world about how the bible was put together. It flies in the face of about 90% of what Christian people will tell you about the way the bible was put together.

The following statement is true with most of us: the things that we know and think were gained wholesale. We allowed someone else to come and put the concepts in our minds without really digesting and investigating whether it is really so or not.

In previous lessons, we talked about textual criticism. I tried to show you that textual criticism is just human viewpoint about inspiration. Textual criticism has to do with human viewpoint about preservation also, and they do not recognize that God has a design to preserve his word through a multiplicity of copies. They do not recognize that God had a set group of people to preserve His word and to see the process of preservation through. They do not recognize that God authoritatively added to that book as it went along.

Rather than recognizing that, people have some idea that God just took his book and threw it out on the sea of time, and we just do the best we can because it just had to do the best it could.

I do not ever want you to believe that God Almighty wrote a book and then just left it to the whim and fancy of man to take care of it.

God wrote a book and God has preserved his word. These passages throughout the Old Testament are clear about that. You get a little glimpse here and a little glimpse there of what he is doing. There are authoritative additions made to that original one, and everybody recognizes all of it as “the book.” That is why when you get to the time of the Lord Jesus he says, “Now there are three divisions – the law, the prophets, and the psalms and they are all scripture.”

2 Chronicles 32:32 – “Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they *are* written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, *and* in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.”

Do you see that word “*and*” in italics? You never want to get so brazen and smart that you do not read the words in italics. There is not anybody reading this that knows enough about Hebrew or Greek to be so bold as to say that the words in italics should not be there.

Words in italics are placed in the text when there is not a corresponding literal word in the Hebrew or Greek text for that italicized word. But, the italics are placed there by the translators

because the translators feel that you need the word in English in order to understand the idea or the thought that is being conveyed. Many times, you cannot, literally, translate from Hebrew or Greek into English on a word-by-word equivalent so you have to add a word or two every now and then to get the idea across. When the translators do that, they put it in italics so you know that is what they did.

It is a very dangerous thing, my friend, to go around saying, “Oh, just leave the words in italics out, because they are not in the original.”

You cannot read the original, so it does not help you to know that. You are reading English, and you must read what that says in English and not what it says in the other language.

I say all that about the words in italics not in regard to this verse so much but just in regard to a standard policy about italics. If you adhere to the idea that you can just leave the words in italics out of the bible, you will wind up making mincemeat out of the bible.

Anyway, notice the word “*and*” is in italics in 2 Chronicles 32:32. They put it in italics, and they add it in to show an emphasis. The word “and” is there for the purpose of emphasizing what is being said, not so much addition.

When the writer says, “they *are* written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, *and* in the book,” he is saying that the vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, is the same thing as the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

I might say, “When I die, I am going to heaven and home.” Well, heaven and home are the same place. I just emphasized that heaven is home.

When “and” is used in 2 Chronicles 32:32, it is not used to separate two different things. But, the indication is that Isaiah, the prophet, had a hand in compiling and authoring the books of Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, and at least some of the book of Chronicles. The idea is that these books cover a long period of time, and they are compiled together.

It is not clearly given in the scripture about how they are compiled together. I do know that Proverbs 25:1 states, “THESE *are* the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.” I know that he had a guild of men collecting things together that God Almighty identifies together as the word of God.

Isaiah was a very close compadre with Hezekiah. He was a statesman prophet who had a great deal of input in Hezekiah’s reign and a great deal of communion with Hezekiah. He, no doubt, wrote more than just the book that bears his name.

Anyway, my point to you is that these things are being compiled, and they are being added to, and they are being collected together.

Jeremiah 36:1,2 – “AND it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a

book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel.” God told Jeremiah to write those things down. God added to His word over a period of time.

Jeremiah is right before the Babylonian Captivity. Time wise, it is way over at the end of the books of Kings and Chronicles.

We started out in the first five books of the bible – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. We went through Joshua and went over into 1 Samuel’s time before the kings. Now, we are over at the end of the king’s period and God is still adding to His word.

Look at Daniel 9 and notice that the book that Jeremiah wrote had been added to the word of God; it was a part of the word of God.

Daniel 9:1,2 – “IN the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”

That is in Jeremiah 25 and in Jeremiah 29. Daniel has the book. He has the word of God, and he is studying it. As he studies through the word of God, he comes across the book of Jeremiah that says, “You will be down there seventy years.” Daniel figures the thing out and he says, “The time is up; it’s about time for us to go back.” So Daniel prays about the thing, and he gets the vision of the seventy weeks.

Notice Daniel 9:2 – “In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books.” That is plural – books. Well, the book of Jeremiah would be one book. What other books did he use?

Look at verse 11. Daniel is praying to the LORD, and he says, “Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.” Daniel has all of the books of the bible that were available at that time, and Jeremiah was just a part of it.

Now, Daniel is in Babylon. He was taken captive into Babylon as a young man, and he is there now during the Empire of the Medes. Babylon has fallen. He has the law of Moses written in a book, and he has the book of Jeremiah. These things have been added together, and he has that book.

I am trying to get you to see that that book goes all the way through.

The book was constantly growing to completion. It was constantly being copied and distributed among the people so that the people had the book. It was so widely distributed that everybody knew about it, and everybody had it.

Turn to Esther 3. The book of Esther takes place about 480 BC, which is late in Israel's history. The Babylonian Captivity takes place about 606 BC, so you are 150 years or better after that.

Esther 3:8 – “And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom, (he is talking about the Jews); and their laws *are* diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it *is* not for the king's profit to suffer them.” Notice what he says about their laws – they are diverse from the laws of everybody else. That tells me that if that fellow knew that their laws were different, and everybody else knew they were different, then everybody else knew what their laws were. You cannot know if somebody's laws are different unless you have some kind of familiarity with their laws. All of the people out there had some acquaintance with the law.

Folks, that bible was copied and distributed all over creation out there.

Look at Jeremiah 40, and I will show you something interesting. Here is a real wild card in the deck. In Jeremiah 40, you are dealing with the Babylonian Captivity here. Back in Jeremiah 39:6,7 it says, “Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.” He took Zedekiah to Babylon.

Jeremiah 39:11,12 – “Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.” Nebuchadrezzar makes a special provision for the care of Jeremiah the prophet.

Notice Jeremiah 40:1,2 – “THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon. And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, (here is what a heathen general in Nebuchadrezzar's army said to the prophet of Israel), The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place.” That is wild! He said, “Your God wrote down in a book and pronounced that he will curse you people because you disobeyed him.”

Jeremiah 40:3 – “Now the LORD hath brought *it*, and done according as he hath said, (that Babylonian officer knew what God's word said, and he knew that Jerusalem was getting what God said they would get), because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you.” That rascal stands there, and he quotes Deuteronomy 29 and Leviticus 26 to those Jews as they go back to Babylon. That fellow had some contact with God's word somewhere along the way. The word was out there.

By the way, you need to study the books of Ezra and Nehemiah (especially read Nehemiah 8). Nehemiah 8 is a kind of “water gate” experience that every nation should have where they meet at the water gate and Ezra takes the word of God and he reads it to him. He opens up

the book. He stands up on a pulpit of wood and he reads out of the word of God – out of the book. They were people who had gone back to Jeremiah after the captivity and they still had the book. If you read Ezra and Nehemiah, you will see all of this.

When you have the time, read those books and mark the passages, especially Nehemiah 8. You should get that passage in your mind. That is the passage where it says that the joy of the LORD is thy strength. The joy of the LORD, in Nehemiah 8, was the result of those people finding the word of God, and having the word of God read to them.

Nehemiah 8:8 – “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.” They read it clearly, and they gave the sense (they told them what it was talking about), and they made them understand it.

Gentlemen, in your ministry, you will never find a greater verse to sum up what your ministry needs to be like. You take God’s book, (and you know what it is), and you read it to people so that they can understand it. You teach it to them so they get the idea of what is going on. Thus, they understand it, and the result is revival, and spiritual life, and vigor; and that is the joy of the LORD. The joy of the LORD becomes their strength.

Watch that same thing happen in 2 Chronicles 17. (Here is a passage that you probably have not seen unless you read your bible all the way through.)

2 Chronicles 17 is talking about Jehoshaphat. Verse 6 – “And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.” When it says, “his heart was lifted up,” that is not pride, but he is talking about being encouraged and lifted up in faith.

Jehoshaphat does two things. He takes away the high places; he destroys the idolatry.

2 Chronicles 17:7 – “Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, *even* to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.” He sends five princes to five different places in his kingdom to teach the word of God.

Verse 8 – “And with them *he sent* Levites ... (he sent nine different Levites) ... and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests.

Verse 9 – “And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, (they had copies of the bible and they were out teaching it among the people), and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.”

In essence, he established bible institutes, and bible schools, and bible teaching centers all over the territory, and they were placed in charge of five princes that were governmental officials of seeing that these bible institutes functioned. Then they had nine Levites and priests, and they were responsible for seeing that the word of God was taught. The special province of a priest was to teach the word. One of his special functions was to teach that book, and the Levites and priests did that.

Notice the results of it. They go out and they teach the word of God all over the countryside. 2 Chronicles 17:10 – “And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.” They do not want to fight against this guy because the people begin to hear the word and they begin to worship God and they begin to function on the basis of God’s word to them. The people around there begin to fear God.

People, I told you from time to time that the greatest effect you will ever have on a society is not to go out and march for rights, but it is to take that book and get it out in society. Preach that book! You will have the greatest effect on a community if you take your bible and knock on doors, and pass tracks out to get the word out to people. It affects them even when they do not believe it.

These people in 2 Chronicles do not want to fight anymore. They do not know why, but the reason is because the word of God is getting out among the people, and there is a leavening process that gets out there.

2 Chronicles 17:11,12 – “Also *some* of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats. And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store.” Tremendous blessings followed.

Now look at verse 13 – “And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, *were* in Jerusalem.”

Go on down through the rest of that chapter and read about the number of men that were there. There is an army of over 1,600,000 men that appear just like that. You would not want to fight anybody that had an army of 1,600,000 men, would you? That is why those nations were fearful.

Folks, when you begin to get the word of God out among the people, you will see that the bible makes people spiritually strong. It equips them so that they can go out and fight the battles for the Lord.

In Israel’s situation, all of those things had to do with a lot of physical wars and possessions and so forth. All of the sudden this big army shows up.

In your ministry, whatever the Lord gives you to do, (ladies or gentlemen), remember that that spiritual principle is true in every age. You get the word of God out, and you teach it, and you do what God gave you to do. You make it distinct and understandable so they can grasp it and it can work in them. Paul says, “It works effectually in you that believe” (1 Thessalonians 2:13). That gives spiritual strength to the people, and it will make them good soldiers and that has its affect.

My point to you in 2 Chronicles 17, (especially verse 9, “And they taught in Judah, and *had* the book of the law of the LORD with them”), is that they had that book and they are getting it out, and the results were staggering. It was the greatest reign that Israel had under a king.

MSS 101 – 15

I have a note from a newspaper and it says, “I am dismayed by President Reagan’s references to the signs of Armageddon in our times. The realistic basic error is to regard the bible as divinely inspired and not simply a collection of legends blended with history as understood by anonymous Hebrew and Greek scholars. An alternative view held by our adversaries, the Marxist-Leninist, as a science is totally fraudulent. Are we to allow ideologues as such irrational beliefs to destroy us all?”

This man has a human viewpoint and a human rationale about the issue, but I hope you have been able to see in the previous classes that the bible is the word of God.

One of the hardest things that people run up against when they witness, and one of the things a rationalist likes to do to you the most, is attack the bible. They ask, “How do you know that is the word of God?” They say, “You do not believe that, do you?”

I used to spend a lot of time trying to defend the bible. I had twelve points as to why I knew the bible was the word of God, and I could go through those points very quickly and efficiently. Then it dawned on me one day that I was not getting anywhere with that technique. I read all of the apologetics and I read the book entitled Defense of Inspiration.

One day, I decided that I was not going to do that the next time I spoke with someone about it. I decided that I would just take my bible out and say, “Yeah, but this is what it says in the bible.”

Then they said, “Yeah, but how do you know that is right?”

I said, “I do not know about that, but do you see what it says right here?”

I just kept dealing with them about the verses, and I found out that works, because they are trying to deny something in that bible.

Do not get all shook up about it when somebody questions the bible, but just use the book.

I read somewhere where a man said, “You do not have to defend a lion; you just open the door and he will take care of himself. Just let him out.”

The word of God is that way. You do not have to spend all of your life defending the word of God. If you will just get the word out, (speak it), it will take care of itself.

You will have to bear the reproach for doing that, but that is okay.

The reason that I read you that newspaper clip at the beginning is because President Reagan is totally wrong when he describes Armageddon in our times. Billy Graham is also wrong when he always talks about Armageddon. There is no possible way that Armageddon could happen in the next six months. There is no possible way, biblically speaking, that the Anti-Christ could show up tomorrow or next week.

I know that blows the wind out of all the prophecy preacher's sails, but somebody should blow the wind out of their sails because all they are doing is blowing hot air into them.

When we get around to studying prophecy, and the prophetic time schedule, you will see all of those things.

In this lesson, I want to continue with the doctrine of preservation. I want to continue our study in preservation by looking at the New Testament.

In the previous lessons, we tried to see that God promised to preserve His word. Not only did He promise to preserve His word, but He also had a design, or process, to preserve His word. That process that we have been discussing, which is clearly laid out in the scripture, demonstrated that God's design was to preserve his word in a multiplicity of copies. Those copies were as authoritative and reliable as the original autograph. Those copies were distributed among the people.

In the last few lessons we not only talked about the promise and the process, but we talked about the people involved in preservation. We saw how God had a special group of people charged with the responsibility of preserving His word. God always assigns certain people to preserve His truth.

In Romans 3:1,2 the apostle Paul asks the question, "WHAT advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." In other words, the word of God was committed to the nation Israel. One of the purposes that God had in forming the nation Israel, and in raising the nation up, and in preserving that nation through history was to have a vehicle through whom to both write and preserve His word. We saw that even within the special nation, Israel, there was a special class of people in the nation whose function was to collect together, copy out, and preserve God's word. We saw the "superintendency" of God Himself over His design that He has for preserving his word.

Now, all of that has to do with the Old Testament.

In this lesson, we want to begin looking at the New Testament. When you come to the New Testament, you have a unique problem that you do not have when you are dealing with the Old Testament. Today the nation Israel is fallen.

With the fall of Israel, did everything change? What happened with God's design? What happened to His procedure for preserving His word now that the people that He used in time past had been set aside?

With the fall of Israel, the special group of people through whom God was going to preserve his word changes. But, the process does not change. The design stays the same, however, the group of people change.

In this lesson, I want you to see that the process is the same. Then in the next lesson, we will discuss the issue of the people whom God has raised up in the New Testament to do the job that was done in the Old Testament.

I think it is important that you understand that the process remains the same though the people God uses to preserve His word change. Israel fell and God set them aside, yet, He did not set aside His design to preserve His word through a multiplicity of copies. The people changed, but the process and design did not change.

Now, you have a special problem when you deal with the New Testament. Can you think of what that would be? When you are talking about the issue of preservation, there are not any scriptures written after the New Testament for you to use to demonstrate from the later scriptures that the New Testament was preserved.

Do you remember that one of the ways I demonstrated to you that the Old Testament was preserved was by looking in the New Testament and seeing that they had copies of the Old Testament? It was not just that God said that He was going to preserve His word. If Jesus can go into Nazareth and open up a copy of the book of Isaiah and read from it and call it scripture, then I know the book of Isaiah has been preserved until 30 AD when Jesus read it. But, you do not have anything like that for the New Testament. There is no way to go to any later scripture to authoritatively identify the fact that the New Testament has been preserved like you can with the Old Testament. Therefore, you must understand the doctrine of preservation and you have to stand on that bible fact.

When you come to the New Testament, you are placed in a position where you walk by faith and not by sight. You are required to understand the doctrine of preservation. By this time, you certainly should understand it. If you have studied through your bible, you should certainly understand the doctrine of preservation, and the process involved, and the fact that God is preserving His word, and that He has a process to preserve it in copies, and that His design includes people to preserve His word. When you come to the New Testament, you no longer need that demonstration. You can rest upon the bible fact that what God can preserve before our age, he can preserve for our age so you and I can have it.

The reason we know that God preserved the New Testament is because of the fact of the doctrine in the scripture that is illustrated, and demonstrated, and carried forth in the bible.

Now, there is the issue of the derivation of the New Testament canon – what books make up your bible. If you went into my library and looked at

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, or The Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, or The Introduction to the Old Testament, or The Introduction to the New Testament, you would find that they contain the typical human viewpoint. That human viewpoint states that around 150 AD to 400 AD the church fathers collected together and identified the New Testament.

If you go back through church history, you will find that between 100 AD and 400 AD, (the 3rd and 4th centuries), the church fathers were gathering together books and deciding which ones should be a part of the bible.

Basically, if you study church history, it is divided into three sections.

The first section is the time of the apostles to 170 AD. That is the time when it is said that the books were written and copies were made. That would 35 or 40 AD to 170 AD.

The reason that they use 170 AD is because they do not think some of the books were written by the apostles during the apostle's time, but they think that some of the apostle's disciples wrote them later on.

(You have all of this human viewpoint going on there and all of the sudden the authenticity of the books is a little questionable.)

Then, 170 AD to 220 AD you have a time when a great deal of theological literature about the canon is being circulated – a great deal of discussion about what books we should have in our bible and what books we should not have in our bible. There is a lot of writing going on about that among the church fathers during that time period.

Then, 220 AD to 400 AD (the 3rd and 4th centuries) the issue of what the bible contains is more or less authoritatively “settled” by the church fathers. However, certain books (Revelation, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Hebrews, James) were not accepted as a part of the bible by many people even after that time.

But, the point is that human viewpoint leads you to believe that God wrote His book, (the New Testament), and there was a book over here, and a book over there, and one over here, and one over there. It leads you to believe that when Paul wrote a letter, he sent it off, and the people he sent it to had a little book. Then later on, after Paul and all of the other authors died, people would get that book and make a copy of it for themselves and word about the book traveled around.

Finally, some of the “big brass” of the church came along and collected the books together. They said, “Well, we think Paul wrote this, and we think it should be authoritative, and John wrote this, and Matthew wrote that. Maybe Matthew wrote that, and Mark copied from it.”

Anyway, they finally collect them all together. Somewhere in the dim, dark past they all just got together and said, "Okay, this is it."

That is human viewpoint. I am critiquing it a little bit, but if you think I am being a little facetious about it, you are wrong.

When you read those books and see what these people say, it is amazing how uncertain it is and yet how certain they try to make it sound.

I hope that you understand from what I just explained to you that it all just flies into the face of everything that we learned so far about how God writes His word and preserves His word.

In this lesson, by looking at 6 to 8 passages, I want you to see that during the lifetime of Paul and the apostles who wrote the bible, (Mark and Luke were not apostles, but Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude were apostles), copies of their writings were made. They were collected together, and they were distributed among the saints as scripture. They were studied as scripture. They were authoritatively recognized as scripture. They were not recognized as scripture some hundreds of years later by decree of some apostate church council, but they were recognized as scripture during the lifetime of the men who wrote the books.

It is God's design to preserve His word. God does not just leave it for men to do. God is involved in it.

If God could write the book, that tells you that God is a God of history. God can enter into event in a supernatural way and cause something to be written down. The words on the page are the words that He wanted written down.

Well, if God can enter into event and history and do that, then He can also enter into event and history and see that it is preserved, and He can motivate believers who have sound doctrine in their soul to preserve His word.

I hope you understand that design that God follows to preserve His word. If you understand that, it is not strange when you come to the New Testament and find that copies of the word of God were readily available, and they were recognized as scripture.

We looked at 2 Peter 3:1,2. Peter says that he is writing "this second epistle" to them (verse 1). Verse 2 – "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." When we looked at that verse, I pointed out to you that Peter's attitude about the books that he is writing is that they are just as authoritative as what the Old Testament prophets wrote.

Notice Peter's attitude toward the books that the apostle Paul wrote.

2 Peter 3:15,16 – "And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, (they twist them), as *they do*

also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” Do you see Peter’s estimation of what Paul wrote? Peter said that they take Paul’s epistles and they twist them like they do the other scriptures.

(If I am twisting this epistle like I do the other scripture, I obviously consider what I am twisting to be scripture.)

The apostle Peter obviously considered the epistles of the apostle Paul to be scripture.

Notice that Peter had all of Paul’s epistles that were written at that time according to 2 Peter 3:16.

People get all bent out of shape about verse 15, about which epistle that is, and they think it is the book of Hebrews. But, it is interesting to me that Peter had all of Paul’s epistles, and he had them for some time.

I know Peter and all of those people had Paul’s epistles for some time because they are studying them. That is interesting.

By the way, these epistles were not written to Peter, nor were all of Paul’s epistles written to the Jerusalem church. Paul’s epistles were written to the Gentile churches, and then copies were made, and Peter got copies of them back down in Palestine. Peter was not the only one that had copies, but all of the people to whom Peter is writing to had the copies too. They were studying them, and they were getting messed up by not rightly dividing the word.

When Paul says to rightly divide the word, there is scripture in their hands, part of what is the prophetic program and part of what is the mystery program, and they have to rightly divide it. That book is being written and it is being copied and placed into their hands. Then, those copies are being distributed far and wide, and they are recognized, at that time, as being the word of God.

Peter calls these copies of Paul’s epistles scripture – equal with the other scriptures. The only way in the world it could happen is just to have a bunch of people with copies of Paul’s epistles and copies of the rest of the word of God. They have copies and none of them are the original manuscripts.

If you think Peter is referring to the original manuscripts there, then you have Peter, a circumcision apostle, who stole the Gentile church’s epistles and has them with him. (You know better than that!)

The subject of verse 16 is “as also in all *his epistles*.” People study them and twist them like the other scriptures. “His epistles” in verse 16 are clearly considered to be scripture. Peter has them and the people that Peter is writing to in the Jewish church have them, and they have had them for some time because they had them long enough to study them.

There are other passages that you will be able to locate in your own study that will bear these things out. I am not trying to give you all of them, but I am trying to give you some that came to my mind as I studied these things. I just picked these out, and I think these verses will help you.

Look at 1 Timothy 4. The book of 1 Timothy is written to Timothy, and it is called “A Pastoral Epistle.” It is a personal epistle written to a young man who is the pastor of a church (or more than one church). The epistle is written with instructions as to how the local assembly is to be conducted, and how Timothy is to conduct himself as the pastor of the local assembly.

1 Timothy 4:13-16 – “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”

Notice the instructions that Paul wrote to Timothy in verse 13 – “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”

What is Timothy supposed to read? From what is Timothy supposed to exhort the people? From where does his authority come?

Paul is telling Timothy to read the scripture. He is to exhort the people from the scripture. He is to teach them doctrine from the scripture.

Paul expects Timothy to have the scripture to teach, and to preach, and to read for these people. When he says in verse 15, “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all,” Paul is telling Timothy to pay attention to his own personal study. Paul is telling Timothy to be a student.

In verse 16, Paul tells Timothy to take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine. He is telling him to take heed to what he preaches, his public preaching ministry. He is telling him to make sure the doctrine is correct and that it is sound doctrine.

Folks, Timothy must have copies of the word of God. The passage does not make any sense if he does not have copies.

And, the people that Timothy preaches to must have copies of the word of God, and they do. It is very clear that these people have the word of God and not just the Old Testament, but they also have the New Testament scripture.

1 Timothy 5:17 – “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” “To labor in the word” is “to study the bible.” People that spend their lives studying the word of God to find the truth in the word of God, to teach the people the truth of the word of God, and to make known the truth of the word of God, are worthy of double honor according to what Paul tells Timothy. Paul says to take especially

good care of that guy because he is valuable to the assembly; and not only that, but he will tend to be the guy who needs to be taken care of because he will not be out doing other things. He will be caught up in that study.

They labor in doctrine and in teaching. These guys study the word of God, and they get the information out – they go out and teach it to others.

According to this passage, there are people that are studying the book and getting it out to others. These people have been doing this all along.

Listen, Paul is instructing them to look out among themselves and to take notice of that elder that is studying his bible and teaching his bible. They are already doing that before they even get this epistle from Paul, and that is my point. Paul is not telling them to study this epistle and preach this epistle, but Paul is telling them to look out among themselves and find the people that are already studying the bible and teaching the bible. Then, give double honor to those people. Those people are already studying and teaching the word before they get this epistle. Thus, they have scripture other than this epistle that they are studying.

1 Timothy 5:18 – “For the scripture saith, THOU SHALT NOT MUZZLE THE OX THAT TREADETH OUT THE CORN. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.” We have been over that verse before.

What two places is 1 Timothy 5:18 a quotation from? It is a quotation from Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7.

In other words, those people that Paul is writing to have the word of God. Paul quotes Deuteronomy, but he also quotes Luke. Paul says, “The scripture says that.”

Do you know what Paul is doing? Paul is saying, “Go look it up for yourself.” Those people had the book of Deuteronomy so they could look it up, but they also had the book of Luke that they could also look it up in. They had the Old Testament, and they had portions of the New Testament already.

They did not have the original autographs.

Do you know to whom the book of Luke was written? Acts 1:1,2 – “THE former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen.” The “former treatise” is the book of Luke.

If you read Luke 1:1-4, you will see that Luke wrote the book to a man by the name of Theophilus.

When Luke writes the book of Acts, he said, “The former treatise have I made, but now I will write about the things that Christ continued to do through His apostles.”

Notice the phrase “the former treatise.” It is obvious that there is a former book and that it’s existence is known. The people at Ephesus, where Timothy was pastor, had copies of the book of Luke. Luke was a traveling companion to the apostle Paul, and he was a close friend of both Paul and Timothy.

These people did not have the original manuscript of the book of Luke. Theophilus had the original manuscript of the book of Luke, and these people had copies of the book of Luke.

People, all of this is incidental to what is being taught in the text. The subjects of these passages are something else, but as you read the passages you pick up the idea, and the feel, and the flow of the fact that these people had New Testament scriptures in their hands. These scriptures were being collected together and copied and given to people as scripture just as authoritative and just as much “God- breathed” as the book of Deuteronomy, or as the Old Testament prophets.

We previously mentioned 2 Timothy 2:15 – “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word the truth.” I previously mentioned that in order to have the ability to rightly divide the word of truth, you must have the words on the page to be able to divide them. There is not any other way to do it. You must have the books, and these people do have the books. They do have a capacity to have some books containing the prophetic program and some books containing the kingdom program. Just as you and I, today, have to rightly divide those books, these people also had to rightly divide their books.

However, there were some people at that time who were not doing such a good job of rightly dividing the word.

2 Timothy 1:15 – “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.” There you have apostasy from the doctrine that Paul had given already. Hence, Paul exhorts Timothy to study to be approved of God, rightly dividing the word. Paul said, “Do not make the mistakes of mixing the two together like these other men.”

2 Timothy 4:1,2 – “I CHARGE *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” They are to take that book and preach the word. The reference is obviously not to the Old Testament, but to Paul’s epistles. Paul wants them to preach that message. When Paul says, “Preach the word,” he is not just telling them to go out and preach any part of the bible, especially not after 2 Timothy 2:15.

Paul is telling them to preach God’s word to us. 2 Timothy 1:13 – “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” I submit to you that Paul’s epistles present to you that “form of sound words” which are to be preached today. They are what equips the man of God in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 “unto all good works.”

Let's look at a few more passages along those lines.

Look at Acts 20. Paul is speaking to the Ephesian elders. Acts 20:28 – “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Then he gives them instructions and he says in verse 32, “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

Is he talking about the Old Testament? No, he is not talking about the Old Testament. The Old Testament is not what you are to teach in this age, and it is not what Paul commends them to teach. The Old Testament is not called “the word of his grace” in the bible. The word of his grace is that word that is committed to Paul.

Paul said in Ephesians 3:2, “If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward.” That is what was committed to Paul.

Thus, when Paul says, “I commend you to the word of his grace,” he is talking about the word of God that had been written down by him. Paul wrote the book of Galatians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians,

2 Corinthians and the book of Romans by the time Acts 20:1-3 took place. They had a considerable amount of the word of God written down, and collected together, and in their hands.

Look at the first part of Colossians 3:16, which is a very similar expression. He said, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.” The word of Christ is that word that the Lord Jesus Christ, from heaven's glory, committed to him through the apostle Paul. Folks, it has to do with the word of God. It has to do with something that they could build up in themselves and something that could be built upon.

In Colossians 2:7 Paul talks about being “rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” Epaphras, and these Colossians, had copies of the word of God with them, and Epaphras could teach them, and they could go home and study.

These people had extra-biblical revelation, but they also had biblical revelation, which is my point. They had the bible revelation. The way you checked out the extra-biblical revelation was by the written word on the page

(1 Corinthians 14:37 – “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord”). Anything that the Spirit of God would have said through tongues, or whatever, would have had to been checked out with the written word of God given to them through Paul, or it would not have been authoritative.

My point to you is not what the passages are teaching you in that regard, rather, I am simply trying to drive home the fact that they do have copies of God's word. His word is being written down, copied out, collected together, and distributed just like we studied in the Old Testament.

Thus, you can have faith to understand that the same process that existed back in the Old Testament, and is demonstrated in the New Testament to have worked for 1500 or 2000 years, is also true today.

Ephesians 3:1-4 – “FOR this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).” Before this writing, Paul wrote down some things about the mystery. He said, “I wrote them afore, whereby, when you read them.”

Well, where had he written them before? He wrote 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans. Paul said, “When you read those things, you will understand.” The implication is that these people at Ephesus had copies of those prior books.

Now, these people are the same people in Acts 20:32 that he commends to the word of his grace. The elders from the church at Ephesus are the people that we just read about in Acts 20. The implication about the Ephesian church is that they had Paul's prior epistles. They read what he wrote earlier.

I am just trying to explain that they had copies of what Paul wrote.

(Some people say that Ephesians 3:3 refers back to Ephesians 2:14-22, but the majority of people do not say that. I will not argue with you if you want to believe that, but I do not believe that to be true.)

1 Thessalonians 5:27 – “I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.” That is one of the earliest epistles – if not the first then the second epistle that Paul wrote. There is a possibility that he wrote the book of Galatians before he wrote Thessalonians.

But, in the earliest epistles that Paul writes, he tells them that he expects them to see that this epistle is read and distributed among all the holy brethren.

By the way, 1 Thessalonians 5:27 is quite clear that the apostle Paul sees the design of preservation as copies of the epistles being made and distributed.

Galatians 1:1,2 – “PAUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches (plural) of Galatia.” The book of Galatians was a circular letter. It was one letter written to a number of different churches in Galatia.

Now, you know what would have happened when it got to the church in Lystra before they sent it to the church in Iconium, don't you? You know good and well somebody made a copy of that rascal. They would not let that epistle get away from them, so I'm sure they made a copy. You know good and well that they were doing that! Paul intended the book to make the rounds and to be a norm and a standard for doctrine in those churches.

Colossians 4:15,16 – “Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And when this epistle is read among you, (among the Colossians, the Laodiceans, the house of Nymphas, and the church that is in his house also), cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.” Paul wants this epistle read, not just as Colosse, but at the Laodicean church also.

Colossians is one of the prison epistles, and it was one of the last books Paul wrote. Paul's design, from the very beginning to the very end, was that his epistles were to be read obviously by the people he wrote them to, but also in all the other churches too. Paul wants the information, and the doctrine, to get out to everybody everywhere.

Now, notice the last part of Colossians 4:16 – “and that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.” That part of verse 16 gives a lot of people a lot of problems. They say, “Well, where is the epistle from the Laodiceans?”

Some people say, “That is really the book of Ephesians, because Ephesians 1 should not say “to the church at Ephesus,” but it should just say “to the church”. That is stretching the truth a whole lot because it says, “to the church at Ephesus” in the Greek text.

But, some people take that out because the so-called “better manuscripts” leave a blank there. As we go along, you will see that it is not very safe to give any credence to that kind of manuscript evidence.

I will give you two ideas concerning the “epistle from Laodicea” in Colossians 4:17.

The first possibility is that there were a lot of things that were written down by Paul and the other apostles that were not intended to be part of the word of God.

The second possibility is that the Laodiceans had some copy of an epistle that the Colossians had not received yet. When Paul says, “read the *epistle* from the Laodiceans,” it might be that the Laodiceans had a copy of an epistle that the Colossians did not have in their hands yet, so Paul is telling them to get that copy. That is a possibility.

The first possibility seems more probable.

1 Corinthians 5:9 – “I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators.” Where is the epistle that contains that information that Paul wrote? It is obviously prior to this epistle, but this is 1 Corinthians. Paul is saying that he wrote them a letter before this one. It is 1 Corinthians in our bible, but Paul is saying that he wrote them a previous letter.

If that is not bad enough Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1, “I wrote you a letter between 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians.”

Thus, there are at least four letters that you can identify, but only two of them show up in your bible. Therefore, I know that there are many things that the apostle Paul wrote that were not the divinely inspired word of God. But, what was divinely inspired was being collected together and authoritatively identified as such.

In the next lesson, we will study how they determined between one epistle and another and how they knew which one was the inspired word of God. God had a group of people whose function in the church, at that time, was to authoritatively identify which epistle was the word of God. They identified which epistle was not the word of God. They identified the word of God and made authoritative copies of it and made sure it was distributed.

There is one other thing that I want you to notice. Obviously, these people are collecting and sharing copies of the word of God. They are commanded to do so.

Do you notice where all of this is going on? It is going on in Northern Palestine (Antioch – modern day Lebanon), and Turkey (Asia Minor), and Greece, and Italy. This is not going on down in North Africa, but up in the northern Mediterranean, up in South Europe (which we would call it).

You want to put that in the back of your mind and remember it!

If you were going to look for the bible, where would you look? You would look where it was written, wouldn't you? So, you want to remember where it was written, and where they were copying it.

If I were going to look for the originals, I would look in that area and not down in North Africa, which is where the manuscripts come from that the modern versions of the word of God are based on.

Anyway, the process of New Testament preservation was the same as the Old Testament process – through copies. God had a special group of people charged with the responsibility of seeing that the task was carried out.

I wanted to you to see, in this lesson, that the process was the same in the New Testament as it was in the Old Testament. You have to base your faith on the fact that the New Testament has been preserved.

MSS 101 – 16

This will be the last lesson on the study of preservation. Thus far, we saw the process, and we demonstrated the process. The process is simply that God will preserve His word through a multiplicity of reliable, accurate copies of the original manuscripts.

Copies of copies eventually were handed down to us, and they are reliable and accurate. They are preserved, and that is how God will preserve His word.

We saw how God preserved His word in time past. He used a special group of people in the Old Testament – the nation Israel. Within the nation Israel, He had the scribes (the priesthood) to preserve His word.

We saw that process demonstrated in the Old Testament beginning with the books that Moses wrote and then other books were continually added to the Torah.

We saw how Christ identified that Old Testament book as the word of God. Jesus Christ makes two canonical statements that identify the contents of the Old Testament canon.

You should be familiar with all of these things.

We saw that the process was the same in the New Testament.

But, in the Old Testament, God gave the word of God to Israel – the oracles of God were committed to them.

Then within the nation Israel, there was a special group of people (the priesthood) who preserved the word of God.

But, one of the reasons, and one of the purposes, for the nation of Israel was to have a reciprocal to give the word of God to and to have the word of God perpetuated through time.

Now, we saw that with the fall of Israel the process remains the same. In other words, God is still preserving His word through a multiplicity of copies, rather than just preserving one original manuscript or one copy of the original manuscript.

But, with the fall of Israel the following question arises. What about the people? The people are gone. In the New Testament you have Paul, and Israel is set aside along with the people that were preserving the word of God.

Well, with the fall of Israel the process of preservation did not change, but the people responsible for the execution of that process did change. In the New Testament there is also a special group of people during the days of the apostles, people whose function (one of their functions) was to identify, copy, and collect together the word of God just as in the Old Testament.

In time past, there was a special group of people and their function was to make copies of the word of God, collect it together, and identify God's word. That process was the same in the New Testament.

We will look at a passage right now, and I realize that what I am about to tell you about this passage cannot be found in any of the books in my library. I have had people laugh at me when I talked to them about these things. That is okay, and it does not bother me to have that happen. If you decide that you will laugh at me about it, you will not hurt my feelings one bit.

But, I believe what I am about to tell you. I will show you the passages, and I believe it makes sense, and I believe the scriptures bear it out. I believe that the reason people do not generally accept this, and the reason that people laugh at me about it, is because they have not thought through these issues.

The issue of preservation has never been an issue that has really been addressed by the church in a controversial situation. Preservation has always been assumed until about 100 years ago. Now that there is controversy, and now that we are driven to the word of God to find out exactly how God preserved it, we begin to understand some things about passages that, maybe, in time past we did not understand.

In fact, I checked today through my library, and another Pastor's library, and there was only one book in all of the books that we have on the bookshelf on the book of Romans that even dealt with what we are about to deal with in this lesson. One book out of about thirty books dealt with the phraseologies in the passage that we will talk about.

Thus, it is not something that is widely understood. It is generally a passage that is slid over, and yet, it is a very critical issue to what we are dealing with. We are looking for somebody in the New Testament who God assigned the responsibility to copy, and to collect together and to identify what God's word is and what it is not.

In the last lesson, I showed you that some of Paul's epistles were scripture and some of them were not.

Well, then who authoritatively said, "This one is God's word and that one is not God's word?" Somebody had to do that.

Well, In this lesson, I will try to show you in the scripture that God had a group of people prepared and functioning to do that job.

Romans 16:25,26 – "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."

We discussed this passage in regard to the fact that this passage gives evidence of Paul's design for the perfecting and the maturing of the believer.

But, I want you to notice something without that thought in mind. Notice the expression "the scriptures of the prophets." What are the scriptures of the prophets?

If you take the books in my library, you will find out that they do not explain that. You will not find the answer to that question in the commentaries, because they do not deal with the issue.

In the Greek, the phrase "the scriptures of the prophets" would be "through also writings prophetic."

"Prophetikon" is the word for "prophets." "Writings" is the noun in the passage, and it is plural. "Prophets" is an adjective in the passage. The adjective is in the genitive case, and it modifies the noun.

The way that thing is translated in your bible, is "and by the scriptures of the prophets." In Greek, it would be "through also writings prophetic." Prophetikon is an adjective, and it is in the genitive case.

Now, you will hear people say, "The phrase 'the scriptures of the prophets' is a bad translation." They say that since prophetikon is an adjective modifying "writings," it should be "prophetic writings."

But, there is more than one way to translate the expression. For example, when you read in the bible about "the glorious gospel," that actually says, "the gospel of the glory" in the Greek text.

With the genitive case, you can translate the noun as an adjective or the adjective as a noun. If you look in the grammar books, you will see that that is a perfectly acceptable way to do it, and it is constantly done that way. If it were not something that could be done, the translators of your bible never would have done it that way.

Let me say this about translations, and I will just get it off my chest. The men that translated the King James Bible knew more about Greek (Greek grammar and the rules of grammar) than any man you ever heard stand in the pulpit and correct their translations.

I talked with some people just recently about this type of a translating situation, and they did not know that you can translate a genitive adjective as a noun with the word "of" in front of it. They were not aware of that. I took one of my books off the shelf in the library, and I showed it to them.

They said, "How about that!"

Well, the men that translated your bible knew those things, and they could read Greek, and write Greek, and converse in the Greek language. Thus, they understood these things.

Translating is not just all about grammar. You have to be able to get the flow of the thing.

Now, another way that you know that the translation “the scriptures of the prophets” is a correct and acceptable translation is that about half of the modern translations that are on the market today translate it that way.

For example, the New American Standard translates it exactly as the King James Bible. It is not just that way in the King James translation. At least half, if not more, of the modern translations translate that exactly like the Authorized Version.

When you hear people waving a stick at the Authorized Version and saying it is a bad translation, you remind them that the book that their professors at school told them was the most accurate translation (The New American Standard) translates it exactly the same way.

I said all of that so you understand that I am going to accept the translation in Romans 16:26 in a King James Bible. And, I accept it with good reason and good authority. I have as much reason, and right, to accept this translation as anyone else does to demand it to be “prophetic scriptures.”

Besides that, if I use this translation, I come to understand and see some things about what the passage is teaching that the other translations make much more difficult to understand.

Now, that word “prophets” (that adjective) is used one other time in your bible, in the Greek text, and it is in 2 Peter 1:19. The beginning of that verse says, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy.” That is the same adjective here in the accusative case rather than in the genitive case. It has a different ending. The noun that modifies is “word” instead of “writing”. But, they translate it in the King James Bible as the other translations also do as the “word of prophecy.” It could have been translated “the prophetic word.”

I am just saying to you that the translation is acceptable. You will hear people say that it is a mistranslation. I am trying to say to you that it is not a mistranslation.

Anybody that knows enough about translating knows that this is a perfectly legitimate and acceptable translation in Romans 16:26.

Now, let’s try to define what is happening here. In Romans 16:26, we are talking about “the scriptures of the prophets” and we will try to identify and locate this. First of all, we must find out who these prophets are. You have two choices. They are either Old Testament prophets or New Testament prophets. Which one is it?

Look at verse 26 – “But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.” Which of those two prophets are made known today to all nations for the obedience of faith? Is the obedience of faith today found in the Old Testament prophets? The answer is “no.” The obedience of faith today is found in the ministry of the apostle Paul.

Then, the prophets in Romans 16:26 are not Old Testament prophets, but they are New Testament prophets. That is important for you to understand. The Old Testament is made known to all men today. People will say, "These prophets have been made known to all men according to the commandment given to Paul."

That is fine, but the scriptures of the prophets are not made known to all men "for the obedience of faith" – for men to take the instructions and obey them today. It is out of order today to offer an animal sacrifice for sins. It is out of order today to look for the kingdom and the millennium and to try to bring it in as the prophets in the Old Testament tried to do.

Now, if the prophets are not Old Testament, then they are New Testament prophets.

Well, what is the deal with New Testament prophets? Look at the book of Ephesians, and notice a few passages about prophets in the New Testament.

Ephesians 4:8 – "Wherefore he saith, WHEN HE ASCENDED UP ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND GAVE GIFTS UNTO MEN."

Ephesians 4:11,12 – "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Notice, when he is talking about this, he is talking about Jesus Christ after his ascension, not prior to it. The earthly ministry of Christ takes place, then Christ dies on the cross, and He spends the 40 days on earth, and then He ascends into heaven. The Holy Spirit comes on the day of Pentecost. Then, the fall of Israel takes place. The apostle Paul gets saved. The Lord Jesus Christ, in heaven's glory, reaches down, and not only saves Paul, but he commits to Paul a new system of knowledge and information – a new realm, a new program called the mystery.

Paul says that he gave certain gifts to the body of Christ – apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Christ ascended up on high, (and in the passage it is not necessarily His ascension after his resurrection, but is an ascension far above all heavens), which is where Christ is when Paul gets saved. He ascends far above all heavens, and from that position, He gives these offices to the church.

The twelve apostles are made apostles before the crucifixion of Christ. But, there were men that were made apostles after the ascension of Christ, therefore, they are not "the twelve apostles."

Do you remember when I pointed out to you, in Romans 1:5, that the apostle Paul was made an apostle by the resurrected ascended Lord? (He is the only one in the bible identified that way.)

These apostles (that became apostles after the resurrection) came from the ascended Christ not the twelve.

Likewise, these prophets are not Old Testament prophets, but they are prophets that pertain to the body of Christ after the resurrection.

Time past extends to these apostles that were made apostles after the ascension, and the “but now” begins with Paul’s salvation.

Thus, a prophet in the Old Testament would be a “time past” prophet.

I am trying to point out that there are prophets that have to do with the body of Christ. There are prophets that affect the ministry of the body of Christ. Christ gave these prophets to us.

Let’s look at their function. Ephesians 2:19,20 – “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*.” The household is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Thus, I know something about apostles and prophets. Apostles and prophets are “foundational” gifts. It is the function of an apostle and a prophet to lay the foundation of the house.

In 1 Corinthians 3, the apostle Paul said, “I have laid the foundation.”

The apostles and the prophets are foundation gifts to the body of Christ. They lay out the foundation upon which the ministry of the rest of the body is to carry on.

Now, one of the functions of a prophet in the bible is to be God’s spokesman. That was not a prophet’s only function, but it was one of them. He speaks for God.

Let me show you this in the book of Exodus.

(By the way, who was the first man that was called a prophet in the bible? The first man called a prophet in the bible was Abraham (Genesis 20). I just asked you that to keep you on your toes.)

By definition, a prophet is a reference to a man that is God’s spokesman.

Turn to Exodus 4. The Lord is talking to Moses, and He is talking about Aaron. The Lord tells him in verses 15 and 16, “And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.” Aaron was Moses’ spokesman; he was Moses’ mouthpiece. He spoke Moses’ words.

Notice Exodus 7:1 – “AND the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.”

Well, by comparing scripture with scripture, the definition of “a prophet” is “a spokesman.” God puts His words in the prophet’s mouth, and the guy speaks the word of God.

Now, we studied through those things when we studied the issue of inspiration.

But folks, one of the functions of a prophet, in the bible, is to identify “thus saith the Lord” (here’s what God says to you).

I am just giving you a few verses to give you the sense of what is going on. The prophet is to identify God’s word to the people. One of the functions of a prophet is to identify the word of God.

Now, that is true in the entire bible, but when we come to the New Testament it becomes especially pertinent with regard to identifying the scripture.

Ezekiel 3:17 – “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.” In other words, Ezekiel is to get God’s word and know what it is, and then send it out to the people.

Jeremiah 15:19 – “Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, *and* thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.” He is God’s mouthpiece.

2 Chronicles 36:12 – “And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God, *and* humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet *speaking* from the mouth of the LORD.”

I am just trying to impress upon you the idea that a prophet is a man that speaks God’s word.

You can look at other passages. I have not picked out the best ones necessarily. But, you understand that one of the functions of the prophet is to say, “Thus saith the Lord.”

That boils down to the fact that the guy is identifying God’s word to the people. He is saying, “This is what God is saying to you.”

Now turn to 1 Corinthians 14:26 – “How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”

Verses 29-32 – “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.”

God Almighty gave His word through these people; He gave revelation and information through these people. These prophets have the capacity to identify that this is what God is saying to us.

Now, one of the foundational gifts used in the establishing of the body of Christ is a prophet. There are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Paul was “the” apostle, and yet, there were a number of other apostles in a secondary sense. For example, Barnabas, was identified in Acts 14:14 as an apostle. He was an apostle in a secondary sense. Barnabas does not directly receive information from Jesus Christ, but he receives it from Paul, and he is sent out in that sense.

Timothy and Silas, along with other men, are identified in the scripture as apostles. Epaphroditus is an apostle, and he is identified as such in Philippians 2.

You have apostles here, and that is a communication gift. These men are the ones that either wrote the New Testament or they were the ones that were sent out from one assembly to the other assembly with copies of the scripture, in order to share with the other people.

The word “apostle” means “a sent one; one who is sent out with authority.” These apostles would have been the men that were sent from one church to the next. They would be the ones that took the copy of Colossians over to the Ephesian church and presented them with their copy so the Ephesian church could make their own copies.

The prophets, in those churches, were the men in the local churches who actually did the copying of the epistles. When the prophets got a collection of letters together from a bunch of different churches, they would read those letters; and they would say, “This copy is the word of God; this is scripture. But this letter is not scripture.” They would say, “This letter that Paul wrote,

1 Corinthians, is the second letter that Paul wrote to the Corinthians, but this is the word of God. The other letter, the first one that Paul wrote to the Corinthians, was just personal correspondence. The third letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians was not scripture; but the fourth one is, and it is 2 Corinthians, and it is to be in the bible.”

One of the functions of the prophet was to identify God’s word. So, these prophets functioned in these assemblies in that way.

There had to be somebody in the local assembly who had the capacity to identify what God’s word was when that assembly received copies from different places. They were getting all of this information from all over the place, and they indicated what was scripture and what was not scripture.

Look at 2 Thessalonians 2:1,2 to see why prophets were needed. “NOW we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.” There were some phony letters floating around. There were phony letters floating around the churches that claimed to be from Paul. Therefore, when those churches received one of those letters, they had to know if it was scripture or not.

Thus, God Almighty in the founding of the church gave some prophets so they could identify “Thus saith the Lord.” It was not the only function of the prophets, but it was one of their functions.

The evangelist, the pastor and teacher, took the copies and did the work of the ministry with them. They did not make the copies, but they used the copies. They preached the word from the copies that they had.

But, the prophet’s function was to say, “This is God’s word.” Then they made accurate, reliable copies of the word and distributed them. The apostles took them out to the various churches.

1 Corinthians 12:28 – “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” God put prophets in the church. He put them in the local churches.

1 Corinthians 14:36 – “What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?” In other words, are you the only people that received a copy of the word of God? Are you the only people that sent copies of the word of God out? Those people are receiving and sending copies of the word.

Notice verse 37 – “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” What is that prophet supposed to do in that Corinthian church? He is supposed to recognize that what Paul is writing to them is the word of God. That prophet’s function is to identify the word of God. Paul said, “If he is a prophet, he will acknowledge that what I am writing to you is scripture. He will be able to identify this as the word of God.”

There were people in the Corinthian church who were suppressing the gift and the function of the prophet, and they were trying to exalt other gifts above it. Thus, the work of the prophet was not getting done, and consequently the word was not getting out. Paul was rebuking them about that. Paul was rebuking these people for their frustration of the function of the prophet.

Verse 37 is a strong verse about what that prophet was supposed to do.

Verse 36 could be read as *Have you people sent the word out? Or was it just meant for you?* That may be an even better way of reading the verse. That would be an even more stern rebuke by saying, “You have not sent it out yet! Did God just give it to you to keep for yourselves and not to send out to everybody else?”

In verse 37, Paul is saying, “If any of you guys confess to be a prophet, and you profess to be God’s prophet, you will acknowledge that what I am writing to you is God’s word.

1 Timothy 6:3 is another reference like that.

Well, let's go back to Romans 16 and recap that passage. Verse 26 – “But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.”

I am saying to you that “the scriptures of the prophets” are the scriptures that the prophets copied down. Those prophets in those New Testament churches (the Pauline churches) collected the word of God together. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation were the books that these prophets collected together. They said, “These are scripture.” They identified them as what God Almighty said, and they authoritatively said, “This is the scripture.”

According to 2 Peter 3, Peter had all of Paul's epistles. All of those people in Galatia that Peter wrote to had Paul's epistles. They had them because of the functioning and the activity of these prophets, who Christ gave as foundational ministries to the body of Christ to produce that book and to authoritatively identify it.

Those prophets collected together more than just Paul's epistles. They collected together “the whole” of our New Testament. In 1 Timothy 5, Paul has the book of Luke, and he quotes it as scripture. There is an identification process, and they collected all of the bible together using this process.

Regarding Romans 16, I am saying that “the scriptures of the prophets” are the scriptures that the prophets copy, collect together and get ready for distribution. They identify them as scripture; they copy them, and they collect them together. Your New Testament was collected together according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.

This process is God's design. It was His idea. It is the “commandment of the everlasting God.” We will be able to get the preserved copies, or God will not be an everlasting God.

I have a question for you. What happens to this process after the prophets and the apostles die, and there is nobody left except evangelists, pastors and teachers? Who is going to preserve the word of God then? Where are the people who preserve it?

God had a process to preserve His word through copies. He had a people to preserve His word. He had a people to identify the word of God, to collect it, and to preserve it in the New Testament. But, these prophets die, and there are not any prophets today. We enjoy the apostle's ministry and the prophet's ministry by having the written word of God. So, who will preserve the word of God after the prophets die out?

Human viewpoint would say, “The prophets are gone so there are not any more authoritative copies of the word of God.”

1 Timothy 3:14,15 – “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

Notice that Paul talks about the “house of God.” That is the local church that Timothy is involved with. It is the church of the living God, which is the body of Christ. The body of Christ is the “pillar and ground of the truth.”

Folks, the word of God was committed to local assemblies for them to teach and distribute.

This process of preservation works in the body of Christ on the idea of what the Protestants used to call “the priesthood of the believer.” That means that in the Old Testament there was a “priesthood.” But, God has done away with the Old Testament priesthood now, and now each believer can go to God for himself. In the Old Testament, you needed a priest to go in and represent you, but now, you are a priest, and you can represent yourself.

That is a bad term, because they use 1 Peter 2:9 – “But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ...” as the proof text for that. We understand that, dispensationally, that is not good terminology, and yet, the truth is real. You and I function today on a personal basis with God Almighty. We do not need any “go-betweens.” We go straight to God Almighty.

One man said, “The pope is a Protestant.”

Another man said, “Well, how do you figure that?”

He said, “Well, the priest prays to the bishop; the bishop prays to the arch-bishop; the arch-bishop prays to the cardinal; the cardinal prays to the pope, but the pope prays to God. Therefore, the pope is a Protestant.”

Likewise, you pray straight to the Lord. You do not pray to anybody in between, do you?

In the priesthood of the believer, you and I have the opportunity to function directly under the leadership of God the Holy Spirit without that intermediary kind of a deal.

Just as the preservation of the scripture passes in the hands of the priest, so it is today in the hands of the body of Christ.

Now, the one thing you want to guard against is this. Please remember this! *The issue in preservation is not an authoritative church, but rather, an authoritative bible.*

The Roman church will take what I am telling you and say this, “See, since the church has the responsibility of preserving the word of God, therefore, the church has the power to say what is right and what is wrong. The church can tell you what the bible says.”

We are not talking about that here. The word of God tells you what God says. The word of God tells you what is right and what is wrong. The word of God is the absolute final authority.

As believers get into the word of God and study the word of God, the true text of the word of God is identified and sustained through history.

Thus, it is the responsibility of the local assemblies, the bible-believing people, to teach and distribute the word of God today. God preserves his word through history in the hands of bible-believing people that study the word of God, and that teach the word of God, and that preach the word of God from a believing viewpoint.

Today you have a situation where colleges and bible schools teach the bible, and publishing companies distribute the bible, and everything is outside of the hands of the local church. Therefore, you can understand why we are in such a mess.

In 1 Timothy 3:15, the local assembly is the pillar and ground of the truth. What is the foundation of the truth? In the passage, it is the local assembly. The local assembly is responsible for the maintenance of the truth.

If you look down through church history, you will find that the apostates do not preserve the word. They preserve scholarship and tradition and denominational doctrines, and they use the word of God to buttress their positions and their doctrines and their traditional scholarship, but they are not interested in preserving God's word.

But, you will find God's word preserved through history out among the mass of the people that do not give a hoot about all those other things. It is the life, and the flow, and the activity of people just like you that has preserved the word.

The word of God is not preserved in a beautifully bound copy of a vellum scroll sitting on a library shelf in the Vatican.

The word of God is preserved out there in the hands of soul-winning, bible-believing, bible-preaching people. That is where God's word is, because God the Holy Spirit in us bears witness to His word.

Bible-believing people use God's word, and the copies of the word of God that they use get worn out. There is a purifying process, a maintenance process that goes through there when errors creep in and the controversy develops. Maybe the two individuals who have the controversy never get it worked out, but the church backs off and sees it with that spiritual sense that it has. There is a movement.

That is the reason I told you that you must be careful because a Catholic will come in and say, "See, it says authoritative church rather than authoritative book." But, the problem is that Catholics never study the book.

I am talking about somebody taking the bible, and studying the bible, getting into the book, and teaching the book, and that is how you will see the maintenance of the text through history.

We will see that as we study through church history.

The local assembly is the pillar and the ground of the truth. It is the support structure for the maintenance of the truth today.

The one word that describes the issue in the Pastoral Epistles is the word “godliness” and “godliness” is “good, right, or proper worship.” There is no way to worship God properly except on the basis of proper doctrine. Sound doctrine is the issue through all of Paul’s epistles.

That is the issue of a pastor – right doctrine, sound doctrine, dispensationally correct and accurate doctrine.

If your interest lies in the doctrine all of the time, you are interested in a bunch of words on the page, and you will fight for that book because that book is the issue.

Do not come along and corrupt my book!

You will never understand the issue that we went over in this lesson unless you start where we started at the beginning of MSS 101 and work all of this doctrine through to this point.

MSS 101 – 17
(Test)

1. The four popularly held views of the bible have one basic and underlying assumption in common. Identify this common idea and the proper “bible believer’s viewpoint” on this issue.
2. Explain how 2 Timothy 3:15,16 teaches both inspiration and preservation of the scriptures.
3. God promised to preserve His word. Demonstrate this promise from scripture.
4. God established a process to preserve His word through time. Explain and demonstrate this divine design from scripture.
5. In the Old Testament, what group of people was specifically raised up to execute the divine design in preservation? Give adequate scripture references.
6. Demonstrate from scripture when and how the New Testament was made available to believers in the church at large. (Example – how the New Testament canon was formed and authenticated)
7. How has the process of preservation continued since the completion of the scriptures?
8. Write from memory 1 Peter 1:23-25.
9. Write from memory Matthew 5:18.
10. Write from memory 2 Timothy 1:13.