

# Understanding Theology in 15 Minutes A Day for 40 Days

## Day 5

### What Are Other Implications of the Bible Being God's Word?

So far, we have seen that the Bible is inspired, meaning it is indeed God's Word. Thus, other things must be true by way of implication.

**One** is that the Bible is inerrant. God does not make mistakes, and his Word does not include them.

**Another** is that the Bible is infallible. If there are no mistakes in it, then it will never fail in what it says or cause anyone to fail in believing it.

**This also implies the unity of Scripture.** There are no contradictions in it, just as there are no contradictions in the mind of God.

Here are a few more important implications.

#### The Bible Is Authoritative

Because God is our final authority, the Bible is our final written authority. Because it comes from God, and God's authority is ultimate, its authority is greater than any human (pastor, priest, bishop, king, president, prime minister), human institution (church, denomination, council, senate, parliament, court), or human document (creed, catechism, confession, doctrinal statement, ordinance, law). The Bible deserves to be believed and obeyed, for to disbelieve or disobey it is to disbelieve or disobey God himself.

This is why the prophets continually called Israel to obey God's law as given in the Hebrew Scriptures. At the end of the Old Testament, God said through his prophet Malachi, *"Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel"* (**Malachi 4:4**). This is what Paul meant when he wrote, *"What I am writing to you is the Lord's command"* (**1 Corinthians 14:37**). John stated the same truth while dealing with the threat of false teaching: *"We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us"* (**1 John 4:6**).

The ICBI Chicago Statement puts it this way:

*We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God. We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.*

#### Article I

*We affirm that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture. We deny that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.*

#### Article II

I have chosen to discuss the authority of Scripture somewhat later, since it is a logical implication of revelation, inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility. However, the ICBI dealt with biblical authority at the very beginning of their statement, likely due to its utmost importance.

I also affirm this importance, especially with the multiplying “voices of authority” all around us regarding what is acceptable and what is not, what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad. **Christians are to embrace the absolute authority of God’s Word in all that it states and are to willingly and gladly believe and obey it, even when our culture says to believe and do something different. This is not easy to do, but it is vital to please God first and honor his Word.**

#### **The Bible Is Sufficient**

What we have in the Bible—Old and New Testaments—is what God intended for us to have. We are not waiting for further revelation or clarification. The Bible is sufficient in the sense that it contains all we need to know to be made right with God and live before him in a way that pleases him.

This was really true at each stage of God’s progressively revealing his Word. Paul wrote to Timothy, “From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15). The “Holy Scriptures” Paul was referring to were what we call the Old Testament. Even though the New Testament was yet to come, the Old Testament was sufficient *at that time*, until God inspired the New.

The very next thing Paul wrote was the aforementioned primary text regarding the doctrine of inspiration:

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

**vv. 16–17**

Once more, “Scripture” technically refers to our Old Testament, but Paul adds that through it, the believer “may be *thoroughly* equipped for *every* good work.” That is, in the Bible (both Testaments now) we have everything we need to know to be who God wants us to be and do what God wants us to do.

This is not to say that the Bible answers all of *our* questions. Rather, it answers the questions for which God wants us to know the answers. Apart from that, our answers to other questions remain speculative and tentative. This should encourage us, however, in ensuring that all *important* questions, from God’s perspective, can be answered based on what we have in his Word. Therefore, we should go there looking for these answers with the confidence that they can be found.

### **The Bible Is Clear**

Not only is the Bible sufficient for what we are to know and do, but it is also understandable to the average reader. The theological term for this is *perspicuity* (which is *not* very clear, although that is exactly what the word means!). **Psalm 19:7** says, “*The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.*” **Psalm 119:130** declares, “*The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.*” It’s encouraging that graduate training in Hebrew, Greek, and theology are not necessary to comprehend the Bible.

This, however, does not mean everything in the Bible is easy to understand. The things of God are deep and ultimately incomprehensible. Some things we need to study extensively and ponder deeply in order to grasp them better. Neither does Scripture’s clarity nullify the need for pastors and Bible professors (I like my job!). But it does mean believers should not be totally dependent upon such people for their understanding of Scripture. With a humble dependence on God, the help of the Holy Spirit (**John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:9–14**), and an earnest

desire to know truth, any reader *can* and *should* understand what God wants that reader to know, believe, and obey.

### **MORE FACTS**

More could be said on how the Scripture's sixty-six books were included (canonicity), how it was copied and passed on to more and more people (transmission), and how it was made available to those who could not read Hebrew and Greek (translation). These factors and others add to the confidence we ought to have in the Bible, even our English translations. They are briefly addressed in Daryl Aaron, *Understanding Your Bible in 15 Minutes a Day*, chapters 21, 23–24.