

Did God Really Write the Bible?



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2 Peter 1:19-21

I want you to imagine that you walked to your mailbox and when you get to your mailbox you open it up and there is a letter in there from the greatest person on planet Earth to you, whoever that may be. I don't know who your favorite person is, maybe it's a celebrity, maybe it's a sports star, maybe it's a politician, maybe it's a loved one who is away, or maybe it's just a hero of yours—whoever that person is has written you a letter. My second son, Finn, is a huge Steph Curry fan. He is a HUGE fan! All he has wanted for his 13th birthday is to go to Golden State to watch Steph Curry play in his home court. That is all he's wanted for like three years, so in November we're going to take him to Golden State to see Steph Curry play. I want you to imagine if Finn went to the mailbox and found a card to him from Steph Curry. What do you think my little boy would do? He would read it, right? He would immediately tear it open! Imagine if it said something like...*Hey, Finn, I saw you bought tickets to my game. I can't wait to see you. Come hang out at my home. Here is my address.* What do you think my boy would do? Do you think he'd be like aw; it's junk mail I'll just throw it away? Would he just go about his day like normal or do you think he would tell every single person that he knows that Steph Curry wrote him a letter? Do you think he would read it? Do you think he would pin it up in his room? Do you think he would frame it? Do you think he

would look at it every single day and every single morning? He would because Steph Curry is his hero. Now just imagine if you received a letter from somebody like that. Imagine if somebody that you admire, somebody that you would love to meet and would love to talk to penned you a personal letter. You went to your mailbox, opened it up, and sure enough it's from them and it's legit. I'll tell you what you would do. You would read it, you would mull over it, and you would probably memorize the thing! You would look at it more than once. You would tell a few people about this letter that you got from your hero. I'll tell you what you wouldn't do. You wouldn't not open it and ignore it. There is not a chance, right? No one would do that! That would be the weirdest response to a letter from the person that you most admire.

I want you to look down at the copy of God's Word that you have in your hands. Just look down at this, open it up, and look down at 2nd Peter. What are you holding in your hands? Is the thing you're holding in your hands man's opinion about God? Is it something that some guys wrote a long time ago that said some good things you should apply to your life to help you live and navigate life? Or, are you holding in your hands a letter from your Creator, the God who made you, the God who knows you, the God who wants to communicate to you what He's done for you in Christ and what that means for your life now and for all eternity? See, the basic question that we are going to ask this morning is did God really write the Bible? If God really wrote the Bible, then you should have the same reaction as Finn who opens the mailbox and gets a letter from Steph Curry. You have a book written to you from God and the only reasonable thing is to open it, read it, love it, behold it, obey it, and memorize it. That is the only reasonable thing to do if God really wrote the Bible. So, the question that we are going to wrestle with this morning is did God actually write the Bible? Then, a second question is do you actually believe that? If you actually believe it then it should change your relationship to the Scriptures, because if God wrote it we should love to read it and seek to obey it because God is the author of it. I think that's what Peter is trying to get these people to do in 2nd Peter at the end of chapter 1.

Scripture

"And we have the prophetic Word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

I think this is Peter's basic argument—God wrote the Bible so you should pay attention to it, you should commit your life to it, and you should understand that Christ is coming back because of the Scriptures. Now, let's go over a little bit of the context in case you weren't here last week. Peter says... *Hey, we told you this gospel story, but we didn't tell it as a myth, as a legend, or as a fairy tale, but instead this message we proclaimed to you is that Christ has come, but he IS coming back.* So, Christ came once and now He's coming back to set up His Kingdom. That is the message Peter is telling. We are going to get into it next week in chapter 2 in detail, but that is the message he is proclaiming. He's saying hey, we didn't make this up!

Peter's first piece of evidence is his own eye witness account. He says he saw Jesus on the mount transfigured before them. In other Words, Jesus let His deity show forth through His humanity, and Peter saw Him not as the suffering servant, but as the exalted King. Jesus had just told His disciples, some of you won't die until you see the Kingdom come and the King here, then Jesus shows Peter Himself as the King and the Kingdom here, so Peter got a glimpse of the second coming. So here, we have a group of people who are starting to not believe Jesus is coming back. Some false teachers are coming in and telling them there is no return, just do whatever you want! Peter is saying no, no, no; Christ is coming back! The King is coming so be ready—exhibit A is the transfiguration.

Then, Peter's going to tell them that we have all we need to know that Christ is coming back within the Bible. So, if you notice that first verse that

we just read, verse 19 says, "And we have the prophetic Word..." That is Exhibit B, the prophetic Word. Now, the prophetic Word can be thought about in different ways, and different scholars will say different things about the prophetic Word and what, exactly, it is. We know for sure that it's at least the prophets' Words about the Messiah because when you look through the Old Testament, the prophets would speak about the Messiah coming. But then if we look down in our verses, we not only have the prophetic Word, but we have the prophetic Scriptures. So it seems to be that Peter would be talking to his audience and it would include the entire Old Testament. Every first century Jew would have thought, according to Douglas Moo, that the prophetic writing and the prophetic Scriptures are the Old Testament. The entire Old Testament is the prophetic Word of God and it's a giant story about how a Messiah is coming. So the prophetic Word is their Old Testament, but I think when it comes to the prophetic Word we can also assume that Peter would have also thought this also includes his writing and the New Testament writings. The prophetic Word, the prophetic Scripture is God's Word in ALL of Scripture. I'll give you one example within his own letter. If you flip to the end of 2nd Peter chapter 3, we see this in verse 15, "And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him." So Paul wrote, but he didn't write his own Words, his own theories, and his own brainwaves; he wrote the wisdom given to him. So the origin of his Words is not his own; they are God's. Notice what he says in verse 16, "...as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand..." Amen, Peter! I mean, think about Romans 7. There are some things in there where I'm like...*Could you not just tell us, is he saved or not?* He could have just said and we wouldn't wrestle with it and disagree about it! What is the election stuff? He could have just spelled it out a little easier. They are hard to understand. Notice what Peter says, picking back up in verse 16, "...which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures." Do you hear what Peter just said? Paul writes not in his own wisdom, but wisdom given to him, wisdom from God and people twist his writings just like they do the other Scriptures. So for him to say "the other Scriptures," what is he calling Paul's writing? He's

calling them Scriptures. Peter knew that all of Paul's writings were not his own Words they were God's Word. They are breathed out by God. They are Holy Scripture just as Peter's Words to us are Holy Scriptures. This is why the early followers put the New Testament in the canon of Scripture because they recognized these guys weren't just writing letters they were writing Scripture, and of course they knew that because Jesus told His followers...*Hey, I'm going to go and the Spirit is going to reveal to you all that I've done and bring to remembrance to you. Then you're going to write these things down.* Now, according to Hebrews, we have the full and final revelation that we need in Christ. That is what the New Testament is the revelation of Christ. So I think you could say the prophetic Word, the thing that we have, it is our Bible, the Old and New Testament.

We have God's Word, but notice what Peter says about God's Word. It's pretty explosive! You might not have caught it. Here is what he says in verse 19, "And we have the prophetic Word more fully confirmed..." What does that mean? What is it "more fully confirmed" of? What has he just talked about? The transfiguration of Jesus. He saw Jesus' coming glory on a mountain. He saw it, he witnessed it, and he's telling them about it. He says that is Exhibit A, but I have something else. I have Exhibit B, which is actually more certain and surer, and it is the Bible in your hand. In other Words, how do you know that the King is coming? He is saying you can believe my testimony and my Words, you can believe my eye witness account, but you can actually believe something that is more sure, more provable and it is the Word of God that you hold in your hand! See, some of us think that if we saw the transfiguration then we would believe, but Paul says we have all we need right now in the Bible. We have something more sure and more certain. So I think that is how Peter is using this phrase, "more fully confirmed." But see, the scholars that I love are divided. That is how I've always seen it, but there is another view. Tom Shiner and Douglas Moo would say that what Peter is saying is that this "more fully confirmed" means that because of the transfiguration now the Scriptures, these revelations, are more fully confirmed because Peter saw it and can testify to it. So, it could be that the transfiguration more fully confirms the prophecies that we read in the Bible. He could have meant it

like that, but I land with Spurgeon. He basically says he thinks what's going on is that Peter is saying you have something more certain and surer than even what he saw. You have a Bible in your hand that you can explore for yourself. You can dig in it, you can look in it, you can chase down the prophecies, and you can ask the question, "Is Jesus the Messiah that is spoken of? Has He come and is He coming?" You don't just have to listen just the transfiguration story. You should listen to that, but also you have your own Bible that you can dig in. Do you hear what he is saying? You have something surer than even this event on a mountain and it is the Bible that you hold in your hand. So what should we do? We should look at it.

So the prophetic Word is surer, and I just want to give one example from one prophet. There are many prophets. There are actually 17 in the Old Testament, but let's just look at one and think about if we can take one prophet and really look and see if Jesus is who He said He is. Let's go to Isaiah and we will read 11 prophecies about the Messiah. Now, these aren't all of the prophecies in Isaiah, there are over 50 but these are just 11 of them.

Isaiah 40:3–5. He is proceeded by a voice crying in the wilderness. We see all four gospels say that John the Baptist is that voice in the wilderness that comes before Jesus and cries out this is the Messiah.

Isaiah 7:14. He is virgin born and He bears the name "God with us." In Matthew 1, Mary is a virgin and she gives birth to a son. His name is Immanuel, which means "God with us."

Isaiah 9:6-7. He is the forever King called Mighty God. In Luke 1:32, He is called the Son of the Most High and He is the Son after David. He is that forever high King.

Isaiah 11:1-3. He is a righteous branch from the line of David. So He is righteous. Guess what? Everybody in the Bible is unrighteous. Every person

is unrighteous, but 1 Peter 2:22 says, "He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth." He is the ONLY righteous one.

Isaiah 28:16. He is the cornerstone rejected by men. Acts 4:11 tells us that He was the cornerstone rejected by the leaders.

Isaiah 40:11. He is the Good Shepherd who cares for the sheep. Jesus said in John 10, I am the Good Shepherd who loves and gives my life for the sheep.

Isaiah 35:4-6. He causes the blind to see and the deaf to hear. That is what He does when He comes. If you think about Luke 7, John the Baptist sends his disciples to ask Jesus if they should we look for another or is He the Messiah? Jesus says go tell John the deaf hear, the blind see, and the lame are walking. In other Words, yes, I am the Messiah. I am here.

Isaiah 25:8-9. He shall swallow up death. 1st Corinthians 15:55-57 says, "...O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is in the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Isaiah 42:3. He is the hope of the Gentiles. Matthew 12 says in His name the Gentiles will hope.

Isaiah 53. The entire chapter is all about Christ who dies in our place for our sins. We can see in passages like Romans 3 and all of the gospels that at the cross Jesus was our propitiation. He took our place. He died for our sins and rose on the third day.

Isaiah 66. This chapter points forward to a Kingdom that is coming and the reality of a heaven and a hell. Verses 22 and 23 say this, "For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain. From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord." So in the end, when the Messiah comes

back there is going to be a heaven. We are going to live with God forever and worship Him. Then verse 24, says this, "And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."

That is just one prophet, one book, and just a selection of those prophecies that all find their "yes and amen" in the Lord Jesus Christ, and Isaiah lived 700 years before Christ came. Do you get what Peter is trying to say? Christ came and He is coming! If you don't believe it, then just open your Bible and read it because the Bible is telling one giant story of a Kingdom lost that gets found in the person of Jesus Christ. The story is not Jesus died so that you would go to heaven. That is part of it, but the story is also how heaven is going to come and marry the earth. The King is coming back; therefore, right now you should be living towards that reality. Right now, you aren't living for right now, but you're living forward. We have the prophetic Word that is sure and certain and you can read it. And by the way, just as a very conservative estimation, there are over 300 direct prophecies in the Old Testament that Jesus directly fulfilled and that is just about His first coming. There are more prophecies about His second coming that Jesus *will* fulfill. Peter is saying go check them out...if you don't believe me, if you don't believe the mountain story, go check out the prophets, and see if all they said did come true in Jesus. It did, which means He came and He is also coming. Get ready—the King is coming, that is what Peter is trying to get us to do.

So, what should that lead us to do? If all of the Scriptures tell us this, there is a direct application to what we should do. Verse 19 says this, "And we have the prophetic Word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." Application one is pretty simple. Read your Bible. I think Peter is really trying to get the people to read the Scriptures and search the Scriptures. They didn't even have full copies in their hands so they would have really had to do some work. Go to synagogues, hear the readings, search the Scriptures, and check it out. You

have a copy in your hand, and Peter is saying if you truly understand that the Scriptures are more fully confirming of who Jesus is and what He has done than even seeing Him in person, then what you would do is search the Scriptures. He's telling us to read our Bibles! He says pay attention to it! It makes sense, right? If the Bible tells us about who Christ is, that He came and is coming, then we should be ones who love to look at the Scriptures and read the Scriptures.

Not just that, notice how we are to pay attention, "as to a lamp shining in a dark place." Here is what we have to realize—we live in a dark world. Apart from Christ, the world is pretty dark. The question is how do we navigate the dark world that we live in? We have to have a light and the light is our Bible. I love Psalm 119. Verse 105 says, "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Do you know what that is a beautiful picture of? Everything else is dark around you and that's why you need a light. That's why you need a lamp because you are walking and you can't see without it. I don't know if you've ever been in a really dark place, but I remember going to Mammoth Cave as a kid. We hiked the main cave and it's about as big as this auditorium. We went in, there are lights everywhere, and the ranger had us all sit down and get comfortable. He made sure everyone knew where their kids were. So we sit down, and all of a sudden, they started to dim the lights. Then they turned the lights out completely and it was pitch black. Usually when you're in a dark place your eyes start to get accustomed to it and you can see a little bit, but not here. There was no light. I could take my hand and put it in front of my face and I couldn't see an inch in front of my face. After about 10 seconds when all of us were getting a little restless, the ranger struck a match and immediately you were blinded by this light from one match in that big room. It was just one little match. Then, as our eyes began to get accustomed to the light, you could start to see the entire cave out of the spark of one little match. See, we live in a dark world and the darkness is overcoming in a lot of ways. But do you know what overcomes darkness? Light. Darkness has no chance when it comes to light.

So what do we have to believe? Number one, we live in a world that is dark apart from the light of Christ. And it's not just now. It's always been that way. We've always lived in darkness. We've always wandered around. We are not good at knowing what is good and evil, what is up and down, why we got here, where we are going, what is the purpose of it, what should we do with our feelings and desires, and what should we do with our bodies. We are not good at understanding those things. So what do we need? We need a light. We need revelation to know what is right and what is wrong, what is up and what is down, who I am, what should I do, where I am going, and what is the purpose of all of this. We need a light in our life to show us that, and Peter is telling us to pay attention to the Bible because it is that light.

But some of us don't really believe that apart from Christ our lives would be lived in darkness. We believe we are a pretty good guide and we kind of know our way. We believe we've got this, so we just live life how we want, doing what we want, and we don't even open the pages of the Scriptures because we honestly don't think we need a light. But if you know you're in darkness then you know you need light. You know you need to savor and love the Word because the Word is showing you how to live and where you should go. The question is do you pay attention to the Bible? Do you seek the Bible as the guide for your life? Or, is the Bible some platitudes and good advice for the life you're already on? You like it until it tells you something you don't like and then you just ignore that and do what you want to do. See, Peter is telling us to pay attention to the Bible because it is a light in a dark place. It's a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. We don't know how to live and where to go apart from Scripture, so we have to follow the Scriptures to know those things.

So Peter says you need the Bible now because you are living in darkness, but you aren't always going to need the Bible. There is going to be a point where you're not going to have to read your Bible anymore. Notice what he says. He's talking about this lamp that we need, but then he says, "...until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." So pay attention to the Bible as a lamp until the day dawns, until the morning star rises in

your heart. What is he talking about there? You need the Bible until Christ comes back. When Christ comes back, you no longer need the Bible because the Word is going to be with you. You don't need your flashlight when the sun comes out. I don't know if you've ever been camping before, but when you camp you don't usually have lights you can turn on. If you're camping in the woods with no light around, then if you have to turn on a flashlight or light a lantern at night. At some point, you're going to go to bed and when you turn all the lights off it's dark. You need a flashlight as long as it's night, but when you wake up and the sun is out, grabbing a flashlight and turning it on would make no sense! You don't need a flashlight when the sun has come up. Peter is saying you need your Bible now, cling to your Bible now, because it's God's revelation to you, but God is coming back. God is going to be revealed to you. You see dimly now, but you will see clearly then. The Son is coming back and your Bible right now keeps you close to Him, but eventually you won't need to read the Scriptures anymore because you're looking at the One the Scriptures are about. You're going to be with Christ forever, but until that day, you need your Bible.

Notice it says there is a day that dawns and there is a morning star that rises in your hearts. So what is the difference? Well, I think the day that dawns is a really public event—Christ is going to come back. But there is also this very private event—a morning star is going to rise in your heart. That morning star shows us this Old Testament imagery of the second coming of Christ. You also see in Revelation this idea that Jesus is called the morning star. He is going to rise in our hearts, meaning not only is day going to brighten up, but your very life is going to turn to light. Your darkness is going to be gone too when Christ comes back.

So right now, there is a dark world and you have darkness in you. What do you need? You need a lamp to look at and to know how to go and what to do because you're not good at figuring it out on your own because you're in darkness. But there is coming a day where it's going to be daytime and all of the lights are turned on in your soul. You will be completely cleansed and washed by the blood of the Lamb and we won't need our Scriptures

anymore because we have the one the Scriptures are about. Until that day, pay attention to your Bible and pay attention to what it tells you. Christ is coming back; therefore, live forward.

So, if we are going to pay attention to our Bibles, if we are going to love them, seek them, read them, and memorize them, then we have to know a few things. We are going to know a few things that are negative and then we are going to know one thing that is positive. There are two things that the Bible is not and there is one thing that the Bible is. So let's think about the first one—what the Bible is not. It's not someone's own interpretation. That is going to be his first point. The Bible didn't come from someone's mind. Just notice what he says in verse 20, "...knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation." That is a really important point. The Bible that you hold in your hand didn't come from someone's own interpretation. It didn't come from someone's imagination. It didn't come from someone's mind.

For example, Moses is the first author of the Bible. He wrote the first five books of the Bible. It wasn't as if one day he was like... *You know, I feel like I bear the image of God. That sounds like a good idea! How about I write a backstory to that so that I can convince my buddy that I am in the image of God, so let's come up with some characters. How about Adam and Eve, a snake, and a garden.* Just plot lines...so he's interpreting how he feels, he feels like an image bearer and he's looking around thinking... *You know what, I don't think this thing just happened. I think somebody created this so let's make up a creator, God, who explains who I am and explains reality.* In other words, he's looking around, he's interpreting himself, he's interpreting the world, and he writes this really great story about all of the things that he believes. He's an image bearer of God, but he does some things wrong so he has to explain that and he makes up the fall. He can't really get over it so he makes up some story about a coming redemption that is going to free him from this. He makes up this story and writes it down. NO! Peter says that isn't how the Scriptures came to us. It wasn't in somebody's own mind or imagination. It wasn't somebody's own interpretation of looking at their heart and the world. Peter is saying no

prophecy ever came from someone's own interpretation and that is the first thing that you need to know. The Bible is not from someone's imagination, mind, or own theory of how the world got here. We do have a lot of books and theories about how the world got here, what you should do, and how you should live, and those are all from someone's own interpretation of looking at the world, looking at themselves, looking at facts, and trying to figure it out. That's not how the Bible came to us. It's not from someone's own interpretation.

Secondly, it's also not from someone's own will. Notice what he says, "...knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man." First, it's not of our imagination; secondly, it's not of our will. It's not of our own volition or desire. Again, it wasn't that men just decided we needed a story. They didn't just get together and write something. Just imagine for the sake of the argument that they actually did that. Imagine that the whole Bible was the product of man's own will and their own minds. Could that be the fact? When you think about the Bible, the first thing we see is that the Bible doesn't have just one author, which is kind of troubling because it would be really easy for one author to write a giant story that had all sorts of prophecies and fulfillments. They could make sure that every book in the Bible was all coherent and none of them contradicted one another. That would be fairly easy for someone to do if there was only one person penning the Scriptures, but that's not the case. There are 40 authors who wrote the Bible. Have you ever tried to get 40 people on the same page on anything? Some of you work on teams. How hard is it to get your team to know one slogan? It's almost impossible. Can you imagine getting 40 people to all buy into one story and all of them are going to write different books in the story? And by the way, every book has to also fill in the gaps between the other books, while telling one overarching story within the story, about one guy who is coming, who is king, and who is going to bring about the Kingdom through redemption? That is a lot of whiteboard!

Imagine Moses and 40 of his guys around a whiteboard...*Ok, guys let's whiteboard this out. Who wants Isaiah? Ok, Jeremiah here is what you're going to write. Obadiah, here is what you're going to write. Ok, Ezra here is what you're going to write.* They all get together and they all whiteboard it out then go into separate rooms and write their books then put them all together. That would be pretty hard to get unanimous story that doesn't contradict itself and all of them tell a story of Christ. And that's not even half of the problem. Not only are there 40 different authors, but those 40 different authors wrote in three different languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Also, those 40 authors lived on three different continents—Africa, Asia, and Europe. So, they're not in the same room. They're not even on the same continents! And they're not speaking the same language! So they have to deal with some hard things. How do we write this one story that all fits together? I haven't even given you close to the hardest part about the whole thing. Not only are they emailing each other back and forth, but these 40 authors lived in a time period that spanned over 1,500 years, so think about that! Moses never knew Ezra. Ezra never knew some of the prophets. The prophets never knew Moses. None of them knew anybody in the New Testament. They didn't know each other! They weren't together with each other! They were 1,500 years apart from each other. That's a lot of time. America is only around 300 years old, and we are talking 1,500 years of gap between these writings! Yet we can look in our Bibles and read, and the whole thing from old to new, is a collection of this one giant overarching story that never contradicts itself while all telling one story of a king who is coming, His name is Jesus, what He does on the cross for us, and how He sets up His new Kingdom. It is one giant story and that is why Peter says this wasn't just a bunch of guys in a room coming up with this. It's not from their mind and it's not from their will. The Bible doesn't make sense like that. It's impossible to even think that it could be written like that.

So, what is the Bible? Peter tells us it's not from man's imagination or man's will, it is God's Word. Notice what he says, "...but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." That is what we believe about the Bible. Notice a few things to break down. The Bible is this—men

spoke. Now, that is an important distinction in biblical Christianity. Men are speaking. Men are writing. It is man's words and that is why when you read your Bible it is Paul's letter to Timothy. It's not just God's letter to us; God's Word comes to us through speaking men. Men are speaking. They are using their language, their education, and their context. That is why Peter's writings are different than Paul's. That is why Moses sounds different than Isaiah. They are writing within their personality, within their circumstance, and within their style. That is why they are writing to specific people sometimes and specific ages. Men are speaking so we don't have dictation. Dictation is God dictating everything to write down. Now, sometimes that happens, "thus says the Lord." That is when God has spoken, and we know those passages. The Ten Commandments was God telling Moses to write them down, but most of the Bible comes to us not through dictation, but through inspiration. It's men speaking from God, not from their imagination, not from their will; they are speaking from God. This is where we get the doctrine of the Bible is God's Word. Yes, men are writing, but in their writings, God is speaking. God is the origin of all of Scripture so everything written is actually the very words of God. So, Paul is writing to Timothy with his words and their context, but every word that Paul is writing is from God so that the letter is not just to Timothy, but it's to all Christians. It's to all of us and it is God's Word to us.

In 2nd Timothy chapter 3, it says all Scripture is breathed out by God. It is His inspiration, it is His words, but how exactly did that happen? How can Paul say something but it actually be God's Words? How is that true? Well, Peter actually answers that question. How did this actually take place? It tells us men spoke from God "as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." That is how we got Scripture. That is how we can say Scripture is the inspired, inherent, and infallible Word of God. How can we say that? Because men spoke from God. How did that happen? As they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. That means that the Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible. That is why the Holy Spirit can take 40 guys over 1,500 years and has them all tell their story, and in doing so, they are telling God's story. And every word they write and every prophecy they make can find their "yes and amen" in the person of Jesus Christ because God is the

author of the Bible. He wrote it through men. He is speaking through speaking men. Men are speaking, but God is speaking through them so that every word they write, every jot and tittle is exactly what God wanted them to say because the Holy Spirit is carrying these men along. The Bible is God's Word. It's not from our own imagination. It's not from our own will. People didn't just make this up. It wouldn't have even worked! It couldn't have even happened. The only explanation for the Bible is that God wrote it and he's saying if you don't believe just go look at it, And I would encourage you to do that if you're a little skeptical.

One of my heroes of the faith, Rosaria Butterfield, who is just a fantastic lady, is an English professor at Syracuse. She was living with her partner and she decided she was going to disprove the Bible because it was getting in the way of what she wanted to do with her body and her relationship. She is a very smart lady; she has a PhD so she was going to disprove the Bible. She started meeting with a pastor and reading the Bible. She read it through and through and through. People began to tell her she needed to quit reading the Bible because she was changing. She was actually different. Do you know what she came to the conclusion of after reading the Bible as just a literary work and as a tenured professor in English? The Bible is what it is. It's actually God's Word and Jesus actually is King, which means that she needed to repent and come in line with King Jesus. There have been many who have sought to disprove the Bible who only found that when you try to disprove the Bible you actually end up proving what the Bible is, God's very Word. And by the way, God's Word is king, so when you discover it's God's Word you only have one of two choices—you either obey it or you do what you want to do.

See, Peter is trying to get these people to believe that Christ is coming back. Guess what? This life is not only now and here; there is a King who is coming back and He has set the rules. He has laid out what you should do and shouldn't do. Are you listening and obeying? Because He is coming back. The King is coming! So I just want to ask really simply, do you believe God wrote the Bible? Do you really believe that? If you do then you can't escape these applications. Application one, pay attention to it. If you

actually believe it like Finley at the mailbox who believes Steph Curry wrote him a letter, you are going to read it. He's going to read it a bunch. He's going to memorize it, take it to school, and share it with all of his friends. If you believe God wrote you a book, you will read it. There is no way to get around that. If God wrote a book, you will read it if you believe He wrote it, because He's the greatest treasure of the universe. He is the God who made you and knows you. Are you paying attention to Scripture? I think there are several ways you can pay attention to Scripture.

1. Hearing Scripture
2. Reading Scripture
3. Studying Scripture
4. Memorize and meditate Scripture

The first is by hearing Scripture and that would be what you're doing now, coming to the preached Word of God. That is the way we hear Scripture. It is a God ordained way for us to hear Scripture. We are meant to come and hear the preached Word of God.

Secondly, we ought to want to read Scripture. Reading the Scripture is like seeing the forest. You're just seeing the big overarching narrative. You're getting a lot of Scripture in your mind. You have a reading plan and you're going through it. You want to see what all God has said. You are reading the Scriptures and you actually love to do that!

Thirdly, you're going to want to study the Scriptures. I think studying the Scriptures is like looking at a tree. So you see the forest but then you find a tree that you really want to dig into so you study a passage of Scripture to see the tree.

The fourth way to really get the Bible into you is to memorize and meditate Scripture. I call this eating the acorn. You read it, you're looking at the trees in the forest, you study it to look at a tree, and when you memorize and meditate on it, you are eating the acorn. You're like a little squirrel

gnawing on this little acorn because you want to get the acorn in you. That is memorizing and meditating on the Word of God.

The only way that you will do that is if you believe the Bible really is God's Word. So that's the first thing, you will pay attention to it because you believe the author. But then lastly you will pay attention to it because you know it's necessary for your life. You know you need it because you're in a dark place. Your thoughts can be dark, your soul can be dark, and you've got a lot of desires that you're not sure what to do with. If you have a lot of things you want that you're not sure about, then what do you do? You put your nose in the pages of Scripture and you read what God has revealed, and it is a light in your dark soul and in the dark culture that you live. If you want to know how to walk, you have a lamp unto your feet and a light to your path. You will know how to move forward.

So, do you believe it? Do you believe the Bible really is God's Word? If you believe it, then you'll read it. If you'll read it and believe it, then you'll trust it. You'll actually obey what the Scriptures say. Just imagine going to that mailbox, opening it up, and having a letter from that person who is your hero. What would your reaction be? I can tell you what you would do. You would read the letter. So if you believe this is God's Word—men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit—if you believe this book is really from God, do you know what you'll do? You'll read it, you'll love it, and you'll obey it.

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