

# Why Study the Bible?

June 16, 2019

## Introduction

From: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/opinion-trans-minister-god-discredits-some-people-1.5176600>

**Opinion | 'If your god discredits the humanity of a group of people there is a problem with your god'**

*As a trans woman who is also Christian, Pride week always brings conflicting emotions. I revel in the celebration of diversity of gender and sexuality. At the same time, I am reminded of the harm some Christians have done to two-spirit, queer and trans folk. I wasn't always a Christian. My family stopped going to church when I was 10. When I came out as trans to my brother, he said, "That's not so bad. It's not like you found God or anything." Neither of us knew that five years later I would be a minister for the United Church of Canada, the first transgender minister ordained to a mainline denomination in the country.*

*We must not let the Vatican hide behind the veneer of theology and faith. Any good theology listens to people and loves people the way they are. You don't need a god to tell you that.*

Opinions like this, more and more, are becoming the rule – not the exception. Has wrong interpretation of God's Word created thousands of years of harm to certain people groups? Do we need to re-think how we treat the Bible in terms of application in our world today? If God has commanded us to love one another, what does that look like? Is the Bible antiquated – with much of its teaching suspect due to it being written by bigoted men?

## Inspiration: The Bible is the Word of God

2Pe 1:16-21 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. (17) For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," (18) we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. (19) And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, 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, (20) knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. (21) **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.**

2Ti 3:16-17 All Scripture **is breathed out by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

### Consider that we were created in Christ Jesus for good works:

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- God has a purpose in saving us by grace through faith – to glorify him by our good works that were prepared for us.
- To equip us for this purpose, he has delivered His Word to us through the means of ordinary men who were “carried along by the Holy Spirit”.
- According to His own Word, this inspired writing equips us for every good work – using the tools of teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.

## **Authority: Because the Bible is the Word of God, it is authoritative**

4. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or Church, but wholly upon God (who is Truth itself), the Author thereof; **therefore** it is to be received because it is the Word of God. (2 Pet. 1:19-21; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 John 5:9)

*“The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.” - Wayne Grudem*

### **Jesus equates the OT Scriptures with the Word of God**

Mar 7:10-13 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' (11) But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban"' (that is, given to God)-- (12) then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, (13) thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

### **Jesus demonstrates the authority of Scripture:**

Responding to the 3 temptations of Satan in the wilderness, Jesus response: “It is written” – See Matthew 4:3-10

### **Concerning authority:**

#### **1. There is no authority apart from God.**

Rom 13:1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

#### **2. This authority is to be obeyed:**

Mat 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Joh 14:23-24 Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. (24) Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

#### **3. Rebelling against that authority is sin.**

Act 7:51-53 "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. (52) Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, (53) you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

Joh 8:42-45 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. (43) Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you **cannot bear to hear my word**. (44) You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (45) But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

## **Sufficiency: Nothing beyond Scripture is necessary to do God's will**

Returning to 2 Timothy 3:16-17

2Ti 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Scripture provides:

1. Teaching: what God wants us to do.
2. Reproof: points out error
3. Correction: provides steps to correct the error.
4. Training in righteousness: demonstrates right from wrong

### **Each of these 3 aspects of God's word stands or falls on the other two**

- If Scripture is not really "God-breathed" but is merely the writings of man, it is not authoritative: Man can err. God cannot.
- If Scripture is not really "God-breathed" but is merely the writings of man, it is not sufficient: How can man know sufficiently everything God would have him to do without God telling him?
- If Scripture is not authoritative, then it is not "God-breathed": An all-powerful God speaking commands necessarily holds authority. So if one argues that the Bible is not authoritative, then God didn't say it.
- If Scripture is not authoritative, then it is not sufficient: if I cannot trust the Bible to tell me God's will authoritatively, then I must seek God's will somewhere else.
- If Scripture is not sufficient, then it is not authoritative: If I must go elsewhere to seek God's will, then that other source is the authority
- If Scripture is not sufficient, then one must question the source of the writing – i.e. whether or not it is truly God-breathed: the Scripture itself claims sufficiency, so if we conclude it is not sufficient then it cannot be said to come from a perfect, infallible source.

### **Practical Implications of Holding to all 3 Criteria**

- Red-Letter Christianity is to be avoided: all of Scripture is as authoritative as the words Christ spoke during his ministry.
- Sola Scriptura: We must reject teaching that seeks to add to God's Word or worse, seeks to deny the authority of God's word.
- Culture, opinion, changing times, etc. have no bearing on the weight of Scripture – Scripture – not culture or public opinion-establishes truth.
- A God-breathed, authoritative, sufficient source must be studied to glean one's purpose and direction and to determine right from wrong.