

OFFICER TRAINING, LESSON 2

THE DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE

I. The _____ of the truth of Scripture.

WCF I. 1

- A. Though the light of Nature is _____ to render man inexcusable, it is not sufficient to give him knowledge of _____.

Psalm 19:1-4 *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.*

God is a _____ ... therefore a _____ ... ultimate source of all Persons / relationships ... part of what it means to say God is a Trinity ...

He is a community ... quintessentially intimate ...

God is a communicator ... always conveying something about himself.

CREATION = he **makes** all things.

PROVIDENCE = he **manages** all things ...

Joe Novenson: "parade of providence"

REDEMPTION = he **mends** his world broken by sin ...



In all things God is speaking ...

Creation and Providence is called _____ or _____ revelation.

But ALL revelation is supernatural in the sense that it is FROM God

Part of general revelation is the nature of man ... God consciousness ...
He is an "image-bearer".

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. Romans 1:18-20

The existence of God and some of his qualities or attributes are revealed to all men in nature, but the sin nature causes them to _____ that truth so that it does not shape their views, values or virtues.

Notice the deficiency is not related to **INADEQUATE INFORMATION** but to **INTRANSIGENT INDIGNATION** against God in the heart of man.¹

The Fall ... blighted man's ability to RECEIVE God's revelation ...

1 Corinthians 2:14 "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Natural revelation after the Fall not only testifies to the attributes of God but also testifies to the Wrath of God against sin ...

His making, managing and mending is all authoritatively explained in a propositional form in **HIS WORD** ...

There was _____ (Word) revelation ...

- Before the Fall (Covenant of Works) (walking w/ Adam in garden) and
- After the Fall (Covenant of Grace) (History of Redemption) ...

It's interesting that both the TEST of obedience and the TREATMENT for disobedience came through WORD or Special revelation.

"... from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. II Timothy 3:15

- B. Though God revealed His truth at _____ times and in _____ ways, those former ways of revealing himself have ceased.

Theophanies, audible voices, dreams, visions, prophetic inspiration, miracles, Urim and Thummim ...

The whole counsel of God...unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or the traditions of men.
WCF I.6

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. I Corinthians 13:8-12

¹ G. I. Williamson, *The Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes*, Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1980, p. 3 "Natural Revelation is 'hard' for sinners to 'read,' not because it does not say enough, nor because it does not speak clearly enough, but because it says too much only too clearly."

What would you say if someone asked you:

“Why do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God?”

Evidence that the Bible is God’s Word:

1. Objective Witness

a. Internal Evidence:

- 1) Unity of design – 66 bks, one message
- 2) Perfection of its moral system
- 3) Its’ claim to be God’s Word
 - (a) 3800 times – Thus said the Lord
 - (b) Testimony of the writers
 - (c) Testimony of Jesus Christ
- 4) Fulfilled prophecies

b. External Evidence:

- 1) Church has always held it to be
- 2) God’s providential care

2. Internal Testimony

- a. *Witness of the Spirit – convincing man*
- b. *Witness of the heart of man – changed lives*

With so much evidence, why do people still reject the Bible and its authority?

Can the evidence convince one of the authority of the Bible?

NO! Why not?

I Corinthians 2:14 - Man is spiritually blind.

The difference between:

Proof - external, compelling evidence

Persuasion - only H.S. can renew the heart / give understanding (WCF I,5)

II. The _____ of the truth of Scripture.

WCF I. 4, 5

- A. The _____ of Scripture comes not from man or the Church, but from God alone. WCF I. 4

We also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

I Thessalonians 2:13

- B. The _____ of Scripture means that there are no errors in history, geography, or doctrine. WCF I. 4, 5

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. Psalm 19:7

Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken..." John 10:34, 35

I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Matthew 5:18

See the *Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*

III. The _____ of the truth of Scripture. WCF I. 5b

...yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

1 Corinthians 2:9-13 "However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"— but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words."

IV. The _____ of the truth of Scripture. WCF I. 6, 7

- A. Though all things in Scripture are not alike _____ in themselves ...

"Paul writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." II Peter 3:16

... yet all things necessary to be known for salvation are plain to all.

(For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 and How from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. II Tim. 3:15).

- B. Though all Scripture _____ everything we need to know about God, man, and salvation, yet not every issue of life is addressed; therefore, Christian prudence and the light of Nature can be used to make decisions which are in accordance with the general rules of Scripture.

V. The _____ of Scripture

WCF I. 8

VI. The _____ of Scripture.

WCF I. 9, 10

- A. Scripture _____ Scripture.

We don't go to the creeds to see if the Bible is true ...

We go to the Bible to see if the creeds are true ...

But, the creeds are valuable BECAUSE we believe that the Bible is clear enough to have been understood by others before us so we do not discount them but use them as subordinate to the Word of God.

- B. The more clear passages are used to _____ the less clear passages

- C. The didactic passages are used to _____ the narrative passages.

EXTRA NOTE: Relationship between Old Testament & New Testament

The Old Testament is in the New Testament _____ ...

The New Testament is in the Old Testament _____.

Continuity more than discontinuity marks the relationship between the two Testaments.

Same God, same Gospel, same means of grace, same Covenant under two administrations, same moral Law of God, etc.

WHAT IS INERRANCY?

Inerrancy means the Bible is wholly true. Down to the individual words, as it was given by God and written by the different authors, it is without error and is free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.²

Inerrancy and Authority

If the Bible is not totally true and free of error, we do not know where error stops and truth begins and the Lord, who speaks through Scripture, cannot exercise His rightful authority over us. Without an inerrant Bible, man—not God—ultimately becomes the final authority.

Does Inerrancy Matter?

The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Scripture is essential to a full and adequate confession of its authority.

Inspiration

WE AFFIRM that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

WE DENY that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

Human Authors

WE AFFIRM that God in His Work of Inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom he had chosen and prepared.

WE DENY that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.

Authority

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.

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.

² This document is taken from **The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy**

WE DENY that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.

Revelation

WE AFFIRM that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.
WE DENY that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.
WE AFFIRM that God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures was progressive.
WE DENY that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

Language

WE AFFIRM that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation.
WE DENY that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.
WE AFFIRM that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.
WE DENY that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

Inerrant

WE AFFIRM that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.
WE DENY that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.
WE AFFIRM that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.
WE DENY that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.

Autographs

WE AFFIRM that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

WE DENY that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

Infallible

WE AFFIRM that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.

WE DENY that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

Truth

WE AFFIRM the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

WE DENY that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

Internal Consistency

WE AFFIRM the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

WE DENY that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.

Accommodation

WE AFFIRM that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

WE DENY that Jesus' teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

The Church

WE AFFIRM that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history.

WE DENY that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by Scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

Holy Spirit

WE AFFIRM that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word.

WE DENY that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.

Interpretation

WE AFFIRM that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

WE DENY the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

Christian Life

WE AFFIRM that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

WE DENY that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences, both to the individual and to the Church.

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

The Trinity: One God (Deut.6:4), existing in three persons




“Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One [_____] (a unity / a collective) ... “

_____ ... numeral one ... “I want one candy bar.”

Genesis 22:2; Judges 11:34; Proverbs 4:3, etc.

One in _____, equal in power & glory (John 10:30 “I and the Father are one”)

Different roles in the work of redemption:

 The Father _____ it	}	Ephesians 1:3-14
 The Son _____ it		
 The Holy Spirit _____ it		

Scriptural Support for the Trinity:

OT – God revealed as a _____ of persons: Elohim – plural
Gen.1:26 - “let us make man in our image”

NT – passages where three persons mentioned:

- Jesus’ Baptism – Matthew 3:16, 17
- Great Commission – Matthew 28:19 Baptize in the Name (*sing.*) of Father, Son, & Spirit (plural)
- All three Persons in the Atonement: Hebrews 9:14
- Our Salvation attributed to all Three Persons: 1 Peter 1:2
- Apostolic Benediction – 2 Cor.13:14

G. I. Williamson: “Is the doctrine of the Trinity revealed in the Old Testament, or is it merely revealed in the New Testament? Strange as it may seem, it is not exactly correct to say that it is revealed in either. As Dr. B. B. Warfield once said, ‘We cannot speak of the doctrine of the Trinity ... if we study exactness of speech, as revealed in the New Testament, any more than we can speak of it as revealed in the Old Testament. The Old Testament was written before its revelation; the New Testament after it. The revelation itself was made not in word but in deed. It was made in the incarnation of God the Son and in the outpouring of God the Holy Spirit. The relation of the New Testament to this revelation is in the one case that of preparation for it, and in the other that of product of it.’”

APPLICATION:

A. We tend to move toward our mental image of God ...
our lives reflect our understanding of God

B. When we begin to really see God: (Isaiah 40)

- We are humbled - Rom.11:33-36
- We realize that life doesn't revolve around us. "It is not about us..."
Acts 17:28; Ps.73:24-28

C. Knowledge of His attributes greatly affects how we live every day.
For instance, look at Psalm 139.

D. Belief in the Trinity is foundational:

1. All three persons involved in _____:
 - Father arranges
 - Son accomplishes
 - Spirit applies
2. _____ - Baptized in the Name...
3. _____ - To the Father, through the Son, by the help of the Holy Spirit

Discussion questions:

- Is it possible for a non-Trinitarian God to be a person?
- If a non-Trinitarian God created personality wouldn't he have to create a being that is superior to him ... at least in terms of personality?
- Is it possible for a non-personal God to experience relationship?

Then we would have a God with no relationships create a being with relationships.

Without the doctrine of the Trinity there is no way for God to be personal.

We could not communicate with him because a person cannot have a relationship with a non-person

4. Why _____ is so important ... community within the Trinity.

E. To Him all worship, service and obedience is due.