1. Genesis 15:1: After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."

   a. The phrase "The word of the LORD came to" is used frequently in Scripture. In essence, it describes the fact of revelation, though it says nothing about the means. Here, however, the method is noted: Abram received God's word in a vision. Keil and Delitzsch note, "neither by a direct internal address, nor by such a manifestation of Himself as fell upon the outward senses, nor in a dream of the night, but in a state of ecstasy by an inward spiritual intuition, and . . . in the day-time" (Keil and Delitzsch, The Pentateuch, 1:209).

Excursus: the Four Modes of Special Revelation
(from Warfield, The Inspiration and Authority, pp. 83-96)

1. There are four modes of special revelation which may be distinguished:

   a. External manifestations, which may take place through:

      i. Theophany (a direct appearance of God, or possibly the "Angel of the Lord")

      ii. All of those mighty works by which God makes Himself known, "including express miracles, no doubt, but along with them every supernatural intervention in the affairs of men, by means of which a better understanding is communicated of what God is or what are His purposes of grace to a sinful race" (p. 83)

   b. Internal suggestion (prophecy, dreams, and visions): "In them all alike the movements of the mind are determined by something extraneous to the subject's will, or rather, since we are speaking of supernaturally given dreams and visions, extraneous to the totality of the subject's own psychoses. A power not himself takes possession of his consciousness and determines it according to its will. That power, in the case of the prophets, was fully recognized and energetically asserted to be Jehovah Himself, or, to be more specific, the Spirit of Jehovah" (p. 90)

   c. Concursive operation: "revelation illustrated in an inspired psalm or epistle or history, in which no human activity--not even the control of the will--is superseded, but the Holy Spirit works in, with and through them in all such manner as to communicate to the product qualities distinctly superhuman." (p. 83; Moo states, "the human author freely wrote what he wanted while the divine author at the same time superintended and guided that writing; Moo, "The Problem", p. 187)

   d. Jesus himself: "He does not so much make a revelation of God as Himself is the revelation of God; He does not merely disclose God's purpose of redemption, He is unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." (p. 96)

2. "...we should observe the unvarying emphasis which the Scriptures place upon the absolute supernaturalness of revelation in all its modes alike. In the view of the Scriptures, the
completely supernatural character of revelation is in no way lessened by the circumstance that it has been given through the instrumentality of men. They affirm, indeed, with the greatest possible emphasis that the Divine word delivered through men is the pure word of God, diluted with no human admixture whatever." (p. 86; see also the discussion on p. 94)

3. "The Spirit is not to be conceived as standing outside of the human powers employed for the effect in view, ready to supplement any inadequacies they many show and to supply any defects they may manifest, but as working confluent in, with and by them, elevating the, directing them, controlling them, energizing them, so that, as His instruments, they rise above themselves and under His inspiration do His work and reach His aim. The product, therefore, which is attained by their means is His product through them." (p. 95)

4. Finally, note the instances where the OT writing prophets explicitly state "The word of the LORD came" to or through them:
   a. Deuteronomy 5:5: (At that time I stood between the LORD and you to declare to you the word of the LORD, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain.) And he said:
   b. Isaiah 1:10: Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah!
   c. Jeremiah 1:2: The word of the LORD came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah,
   d. Ezekiel 1:3: the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. There the hand of the LORD was upon him. (N.B. Ezekiel uses this term at least 57 times!)
   e. Hosea 1:1: The word of the LORD that came to Hosea son of Beeri during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel:
   f. Joel 1:1: The word of the LORD that came to Joel son of Pethuel.
   g. Amos 7:16: Now then, hear the word of the LORD. You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and stop preaching against the house of Isaac.'
   h. Jonah 1:1: The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai:
   i. Micah 1:1: The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah--the vision he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.
   j. Zephaniah 1:1: The word of the LORD that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, during the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah:
   k. Haggai 1:1: In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest:
1. Zechariah 1:1: In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo:

m. Malachi 1:1: An oracle: The word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.

5. Distinguishing inspiration, revelation, and illumination (Geisler and Nix, From God to Us, p. 14):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVELATION</th>
<th>INSPIRATION</th>
<th>ILLUMINATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Origin and giving of truth</td>
<td>Reception and recording of truth</td>
<td>Subsequent apprehension and understanding of truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective disclosure</td>
<td>Means by which the revelation becomes an objective disclosure</td>
<td>Subjective understanding of the objective disclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact of divine communication</td>
<td>Means of divine communication</td>
<td>The gift of understanding divine communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. There are at least seven ideas of inspiration (Marshall, Biblical Inspiration, pp. 31-47). They are not all mutually exclusive, and show emphasis on disparate foci:

a. Dictation: A conscious reception of a divine message through a dream, vision, inward voice, etc., amounting to essentially a 'dictation' of what is to be received. This is seen often in the Bible through the prophets, but it does not apply to the entire Bible.

b. Religious genius: The inspiration of the Bible is nothing more eloquent men with special religious genius expressing their religious insights (the general "liberal" view). Again, some elements of this may be seen in the Bible, but this can by no means account for the entire text.

c. Witness: Some think that the Bible "is to be understood as a witness to divine revelation rather than as revelation itself" (p. 35).

d. Continuing: "The Bible may be no different from other books as regards its composition, but it is different in that the Holy Spirit can use it and make it a means of revelation by speaking through it to particular individuals and communities. The Bible becomes revelation through the continuing inspiration of the Spirit." (p. 36)

e. Compositional: The composition of the Bible is where we see inspiration: "The composition of the biblical books arises out of the coming together of traditions regarding what God has done, the situation faced by the believing community in which it tries to understand and apply its inherited traditions, and the activity of 'respondents' who take up the traditions and reformulate them in specific situations, thus producing the
Scriptures. It is in this process that the Spirit is at work, not just at the moment of final composition but in the whole history of the formulation of the traditions, and again not just in the process of composition but in the whole process of Scripture being read and interpreted today." (p. 38)

f. Based on the English understanding of "inspired": Just as a good teacher can "inspire" his or her students to work beyond their normal capacity, so God "inspired" the authors of Scripture; "...since God himself is omniscient and infallible and consciously initiated this process, it follows that the resulting product will be true and reliable, although not necessarily infallible in every particular" P. 39).

g. Concursive (the main evangelical position): to be seen from two angles:
   i. Human level: normal research and reflection went into the collection of materials and their "packaging" and writing.
   ii. Divine level: The Spirit worked concursively: He "was active in the whole process so that the Bible can be regarded as both the words of men and the Word of God." (p. 42)

b. Henry Morris comments:

   One of the grandest concepts of human thought is that of the Word. Man is distinguished from the animals primarily by his ability to formulate and communicate ideas. His capacity for intelligible, abstract, symbolic language, both written and spoken, is unique in the world of living creatures.

   The source of such a remarkable ability can only be divine creation. As a matter of fact, the very purpose of language is that God might communicate His will to man and man might respond in praise to God. Since man was created for fellowship with God, and since fellowship requires communication, it is essential that the Creator somehow speak to man. (Morris, The Genesis Record, p. 323).

c. One critical area in which our presuppositions should be noted is that of language and meaning. If we are to relevantly discuss the Bible as God's revelation to man, we need to first settle some presuppositional questions in these areas:

   i. Language (Vanhoozer, "The Semantics", pp. 82-92; Larkin, Culture, pp. 70-84, 193-6; Hesselgrave, Communicating Christ, pp. 239-42, 258-70; Hesselgrave and Rommen, Contextualization, pp. 158-69): is it a tool to convey "truth" across cultural/historical gaps?

   ii. Meaning (Larkin, Culture, pp. 70-76, 242-63; Hesselgrave, Communicating Christ, pp. 38-50; Hesselgrave and Rommen, Contextualization, pp. 170-79): is it located within the individual, or is there an "objective reality" to which meanings refer? It is single or multiple, especially in reference to the Bible? Can these be adequately addressed by human language? Is it possible to convey meaning across a cultural and/or historical gap?

2. Exodus 7:1-2: Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and
your brother Aaron will be your prophet. 2 You are to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his country.

This is our first encounter with the term "prophet" in the OT. While it does get ahead of the discussion which follows, it will be worth our time here to discuss what a "prophet" was and what he did as seen in the OT.

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**Excursus: Prophets in the OT**

1. The etymology of the term "prophet" (נביא, nabi') is debated. There seem to be four options (Culver, TWOT, p. 544):
   a. From an Arabic root (naba'a) meaning "to announce", giving the idea of a **spokesman**.
   b. From a Hebrew root (naba) meaning "to bubble up", giving the idea of **pouring forth words**.
   c. From an Akkadian root (nabu) meaning "to call", giving the idea of **one who is called [by God]**.
   d. From an unknown Semitic root.

Even though we no longer know with certainty the derivation of the term, the essential meaning of "an authorized spokesman" is generally agreed upon, as derived from Exod. 6:28-7:2, Num. 12:1-8, and Deut. 18:9-22.

2. What was an OT prophet (quotes, except where noted, are from Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, pp. 17-20; for technical discussion, see Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, pp. 12-20)?
   a. The main function of Old Testament prophets was to be **messengers from God**, sent to speak to men and women with words from God (p. 17). They knew they were not speaking for themselves but for God who had sent them, and they spoke with His authority (p. 18). The phrase "Thus says the LORD", is "a royal decree formula used to preface the edict of a king to his subjects, an edict that could not be challenged or questioned but simply had to be obeyed. God is viewed as the sovereign king of Israel, and when the prophets speak, they are seen as bringing the divine king's absolutely authoritative decrees to His subjects." (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 22).

   b. The authority of God's messengers, the prophets, was not limited to the general content or just the main ideas of their messages. Rather, they claimed repeatedly that **their very words** were words which God had given them to deliver (p. 18). There are certain consequences of this (p. 20):
      i. To disbelieve or disobey a prophet's words is to disbelieve or disobey God.
      ii. The words of a true prophet are beyond challenge or question.
      iii. What purpose did the prophets serve? (from Yoder, *He Gave Some Prophets*, pp. 15-6):
To make known to man the nature and will of God, and to set up standards of righteousness.

To rebuke sin and bring the wayward and erring to repentance.

To initiate religious, social, moral, and political reforms.

To warn the erring, the unruly and undisciplined, of the judgments of God.

To encourage the faithful with messages of hope and consolation and comfort.

To make known the greatness and goodness and mercy of Him who is greater than all the needs of mankind and is able to deliver people and nations regardless of what their problems and limitations may be.

3. There were five "certifying signs" of a prophet (from Culver, "nabi", TWOT):
   a. The prophet must be an Israelite (Deut. 18:15, 18);
   b. He speaks in Jehovah's name--the "voice of Jehovah" (Deut. 18:19);
   c. Supernatural knowledge of the near future was to be a sign of the authenticity of the divine appointment (Deut. 18:20-22);
   d. The prophet might perform some other miraculous sign (Deut. 13:1 ff.);
   e. The final test is strict conformity to the previously certified revelations (Deut. 13:18).

3. Exodus 17:14 (compare Exod. 17:14; 24:2-4; 34:27; Num. 33:2; Deut. 31:9, 22, 24; Josh. 24:26; 1 Sam. 10:25; 1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 26:22; 32:32; Isa. 30:8; Jer. 29:1; 30:2; 36:1-32; 45:1; 51:60; Ezek. 43:11; Hab. 2:2; Dan. 7:1): Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

Repeatedly throughout the OT (see the above references), God commands his prophets not only to speak, but to write down His words. By doing this, men were writing down the very words that God wanted them to write. As Grudem notes, "Once again, the evaluation of the character of these words (they are both human and divine) and of their truth-status (they must be believed and obeyed) seems indistinguishable from the evaluation of direct divine speech and of divine speech spoken by people." (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 25)

   a. The Old Testament frequently shows God speaking directly to people using spoken words, not just thoughts or ideas. James Barr notes: "Direct verbal communication between God and particular men on particular occasions . . . is, I believe, an inescapable fact of the Bible and of the OT in particular." (Barr, "The Interpretation", p. 201; cited
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by Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 20)

b. It is important to note that this passage, and the others noted, "never view human language as a barrier to effective communication by God" (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 20).

c. Throughout the Old Testament there is an emphasis not simply on the general content of prophetic speech as coming from God, but on the very words themselves. (Ibid., p. 20).

5. Exodus 32:16 (see also 31:18): The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

We should note that some parts of the Bible were dictated verbatim. Here, we see that the Ten Commandments were not only "dictated", but that God Himself did the writing (see Harris, Inspiration, p. 20). We note, however, that Cassuto understands this to refer to their divine character, not to the idea that God actually did the writing (Cassuto, Exodus, pp. 405-6).

6. Numbers 23:19 (comp. 1 Sam. 15:29): God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and then not fulfill?

a. The purpose of this statement is to tell Balak that Balaam could not prophecy something contrary to his first blessing on Israel--God would not make the first prophecy a lie by giving a second which contradicted the first. "This passage therefore refers to human words spoken by a prophet in God's name as God's words. It further says of those prophetic words that the normal human proclivity for lying does not apply to them; even though they were spoken by human lips they can only rightly be assigned a truth-status that stands in clear contrast to one that normally describes human speech: the words of people contain lies, but God's words spoken by people do not." (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", pp. 28-29)

b. Not only did God not lie in Balaam's first prophecy (Num. 23:6-10), the statement is of a general nature, indicating that no prophet, speaking God's words, will tell a lie. In all of God's words, He meets a divine standard of faithfulness and truthfulness (propositional!).

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**Excursus: What Is Truth?**

1. Preliminary: some presuppositional questions and issues of epistemology:

a. **Truth** (Larkin, Culture, pp. 231-41; Vanhoozer, "The Semantics", pp. 95-103; Carson, "Recent Developments", pp. 35-6; Nicole, "The Biblical Concept of Truth"; Fudge, "Can Doctrinal Statements Be Objective?"; Houston, "Objectivity and the Gospels"; Davis, Theology Primer, pp. 57-65; Marshall, Biblical Inspiration, pp. 54-61): is it **objective** and **absolute or relative** to the culture? If absolute, how can absolute truths be differentiated from relative cultural values?

b. **Logic** (Carson, "Recent Developments", pp. 24-5; Carson, "Unity and Diversity", p. 80; Moo, "The Problem", pp. 179-81):
i. **Logic principles:** are we to build a foundation on the "law of non-contradiction" or allow more "Eastern" mystical approaches as our foundation (see especially Carson, "Unity and Diversity", p. 80)? Do we need to confine our searching to any one system of logic? How do we mediate if (or when) we find logical conflicts?

ii. **Logic methods:** are we to use deduction, induction, or adduction (which incorporates the first two processes but leaves room for the sudden insight; see Carson, "Recent Developments", pp. 24-5).

c. **Revelation** (Vanhooser, "The Semantics", pp. 56-75; Larkin, Culture, pp. 223-31; Hesselgrave and Rommen, Contextualization, pp. 128-43): is it objective and propositional or subjective and relational or some combination of these or completely different from them?

2. The biblical view of truth (adapted from Nicole, "The Biblical Concept of Truth")

a. **Truth** (, *emet*) in the Old Testament

i. Faithfulness and reliability on the part of a person who can be depended on to perform according to a promise or a principle (On God's faithfulness, see Gen. 24:27; 31:10; Exod. 34:6; Josh. 2:14; 2 Sam. 2:6; Neh. 9:33; Ps. 25:10; 30:9; 40:10, 11; 54:5; 57:3; 61:7; 71:22; 85:10, 11; 86:15; 89:14; 91:4; 115:1; 117:2; 138:2, 146:6; Isa. 38:18, 19; 42:3; 61:8; Mic. 7:20; Zech. 8:8).

ii. That which conforms to reality in contrast to anything that would be erroneous or deceitful (see, for example, Deut. 13:14; 17:4; 22:20; 1 Kings 10:6; Prov. 8:7; Jer. 9:5; Dan. 8:26; 10:1; 11:2; Zech. 8:16)

b. **Truth** (, *aletheia*) in the New Testament

i. The primary NT emphasis is clearly on truth as conformity to reality and opposition to lies or errors (see John 7:18, 28; 8:26; Acts 12:9; Rom. 1:25; 3:4, 7; 15:8; 2 Cor. 6:8; Eph. 4:25; Phil. 1:18; James 3:14; 1 John 2:4, 21, 27; 3:18).

ii. A secondary emphasis is on completeness (John 1:9; 6:32, 55; 15:1; Heb. 8:2; 9:24).

6. Deuteronomy 4:1-2 (see also Deut. 12:32): Hear now, O Israel, the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. 2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

a. God's words to Israel through Moses are so important that they must not be either

i. Added to: that they are complete and give us all we need--to add to them makes them merely men's words (Keil and Delitzsch, The Pentateuch, 3:309).

ii. Subtracted from: none of them are insignificant or unnecessary (see Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", pp. 29-30; see also Stibbs, "Witness of Scripture", ...
b. While this command applied specifically to the Law as given in Deuteronomy 5-26, it did not eliminate further revelation from God (cf. Deut. 18:15-18;Craigie, Deuteronomy, p. 130)

7. Deuteronomy 13:1-5: If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, "Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them," you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has counseled rebellion against the LORD your God who brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to seduce you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from among you.

a. The fact that a prophet performs a sign or wonder is not the final test of his veracity (note Exod. 7:11, 22, and 8:7)--more important is his (or her) teaching. That teaching is to be compared to a standard which can only be expressed propositionally. The prophet, then, must speak propositional truth (which, by the nature of truth, will be in accordance with the rest of God's revealed word) before his word is to be received.

b. Is it possible that he fact that no true prophet would contradict God's word may be seen as a verification of the logical principle of the "Law of Non-Contradictio", which states, "Something cannot be both true and not true at the same way in the same time", and gives a basis for subjecting claims to a test of truth only if there is an absolute standard to go on? God, in this verse, reveals that their is such an absolute standard, and presupposes that we are able to compare verbal (propositional) proposals with that standard. If the Law of Non-Contradiction were not universally valid, this test would not be valid.

8. Deuteronomy 18:20-22: But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. And you may say in your heart, "How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?" When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

a. Just prior to these verses, God promises to raise up another prophet like Moses (exhaustively fulfilled in Jesus, but also partially fulfilled in the OT office of prophet; vv. 15-19).

b. Here we see a second major test of a true prophet--what he has spoken must come to pass (see also Jer. 23:9-32 and Ezekiel 13).

c. For bibliological discussion, the importance of this second test is that is gives one more way by which the claims of the OT prophets could be evaluated. Every writing prophet of the OT passed both tests, from which we may conclude that their prophecies were God-given, and therefore in conformity with propositional truth (the followed the LORD) and temporal reality (they came to pass).
9. Deuteronomy 31:26: "Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. There it will remain as a witness against you."

Moses wrote down all that God wanted him to write, and this became the Book of the Law. It contained all the instructions He had given Israel, and the truths it contained would stand as a witness that they had made a covenant with God. Further, it would be a witness against them when they violated their part of the covenant.

10. Deuteronomy 32:46-47: When Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel, 46 he said to them, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. 47 They are not just idle words for you--they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.

a. This verse still applies today: WE are to set our hearts ("the seat of the mind in Hebrew conception"; Craigie, Deuteronomy, p. 390) on God's word (which now applies to the whole Bible, not just the Mosaic covenant).

b. Further, we are to command the word to our children, so that they may follow in our footsteps.

c. Finally, the reason we are to do this:

i. The Law is not a vain thing ("that is, the words of this law (v. 46) were not merely human words, Moses' words, or even written words, but they were words spoken by God with the specific intention of imparting life" (Craigie, Deuteronomy, p. 390).

ii. It is our life!

BIBLIOLOGY FROM JOSHUA TO SONG OF SOLOMON

11. Joshua 1:8 (see also 3:4; 8:34): Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

a. Joshua placed immediate authority on Moses' writings--they must all be obeyed.

b. Further, we are instructed:

i. Do not let it depart from our mouth ("The law is in our mouth, not only when we are incessantly preaching it, but when we are reading it intelligently for ourselves, or conversing about it with others." (Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary, 2:1:30).

ii. Meditate on it day and night

iii. Be careful to do everything written in it.

c. It is promised that by following this we will be successful.

12. Joshua 23:6-8: "Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left. Do not associate with these nations that
remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them. You must not serve them or bow down to them. 8 But you are to hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have until now.

a. In his farewell address to the people, Joshua reminds them to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses--no part of Scripture is to be neglected as unimportant; no part is more "inspired" than any other. Unfortunately, the people obeyed this command only for a short time.

b. Our obedience may take strength, especially in the face of those who oppose (or ridicule) the Scriptures.

c. Verse 8 indicates that by obeying the Scriptures we are "holding fast to God", which makes sense only if they are His words.

13. 1 Kings 17:24: Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth."

The widow of Zarephath recognized Elijah as a genuine prophet after her son was raised from the dead. Concurrent with this was the assurance that Elijah's "word of the LORD" is the truth, not just wishful thinking. For something to be true, there must be a propositional element involved. God's word through His prophets cannot be confined to predictions or events, it must also be seen as having propositional elements.

14. 2 Chronicles 17:9: They taught throughout Judah, taking with them the Book of the Law of the LORD; they went around to all the towns of Judah and taught the people.

Jehosophat sent out officials (together with Levites and priests) all over Judah to teach the people from the "Book of the Law of the LORD" (most likely the Pentateuch).

15. 2 Chronicles 34:14-15: While they were bringing out the money that had been taken into the temple of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD that had been given through Moses. 15 Hilkiah said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the LORD." He gave it to Shaphan.

2 Chronicles 34:21: "Go and inquire of the LORD for me and for the remnant in Israel and Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the LORD's anger that is poured out on us because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written in this book."

Apparently the Pentateuch had been lost for sometime, but God ensured that it does not remain lost! As it is read to Josiah, he immediately recognized its significance and ordered it to be studied to that they might obey the LORD in everything. Again we may note the testimony that Moses' writings are the "word of the LORD".

16. 2 Chronicles 36:21 (see also Ezra 1:1): The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah. 22. In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing:
That God spoke through Jeremiah (and that he was a true prophet) is confirmed through the Chronicler and Ezra.

17. Ezra 7:9-10: He had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, for the gracious hand of his God was on him. For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.

   a. Because of Ezra's commitment to the word of God, God blessed him (see Josh. 1:8).

   b. Ezra was devoted to (lit. "set his heart firmly to"; Martin, "Ezra", BKC(OT), p. 666):

      i. Study
      ii. Observance
      iii. Teaching

   His pattern is one that we should continue to follow today!

18. Nehemiah 8:8-9: They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read. 9. Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is sacred to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

   The convicting power of the word of God is displayed, as the people understand it and weep over their lack of obedience to it.

19. Psalm 1:1-3: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

   a. The Hebrew expresses "O how very happy is the man!" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 34). The negatives, for our purposes, all indicate walking contrary to God's word.

   b. The root of his life: delight is in God's law--the Hebrew word order places the Law in position of emphasis.

      i. Delight: It is obviously not seen by him as only a set of rules or regulations that hinder his enjoyment of life.

      ii. Law: not just the Ten Commandments, but the whole Pentateuch, and, indeed, the whole word of God (Leupold, Psalms, p. 35; also Kidner, Psalms, p. 48).

      iii. Meditates (or ponders): "The verb 'ponder' (yehgeh) does, indeed, mean 'moan, hum, utter, speak, muse,' but all meanings involve the same process. For the man is pictured as reading over texts of this law to himself. This half-aloud reading and rereading are really the process of musing or meditating as it may be practiced in the Orient." (Leupold, Psalms, pp. 35-6) This pondering is done day and night, not with a slavish works mentality, but out of the joy of being immersed in God's revelation to man.
c. The **fruit** of his life: Whatever he does prospers

20. Psalm 12:6: And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.

a. "Whatever is spoken by God, who cannot lie, must be pure and true altogether. Every word which proceedeth from the mouth of the heavenly Father must in the very nature of the case be absolutely free from error." (Young, *Thy Word*, p. 40)

b. The Hebrew term used of God's word places emphasis the actual words themselves, not the general idea communicated (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 30).

c. Purity indicates "freedom from imperfections and impurities". That the silver is refined seven times indicates completeness of perfection, further strengthening the idea of purity. (Ibid., pp. 30-1)

21. Psalms 18:30 (see also 2 Sam. 22:30-33, Psalms 12:6, and Proverbs 30:5): As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

a. This passage seems to apply to the written word of God, the plural form being used in a collective sense.

b. Again, God's word is flawless: "God's words are words from which all impurities have been removed". The purity referred to is that of trustworthiness, not grammatical polish or uniformitarianism in style (see Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", pp. 31-32).

22. Psalms 19:7-11: The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. 10 The are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. 11 By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

a. Some basic truths about God's word and the consequences of those truths are presented in this Psalm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOUN</th>
<th>ADJECTIVE</th>
<th>VERB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
<td>It revives the soul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statutes</td>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>They make the simple wise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precepts</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>They give joy to the heart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commands</td>
<td>Radiant</td>
<td>They give light to the eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinances</td>
<td>Sure</td>
<td>Every one of them is righteous.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. God's **law** is **perfect; reviving the soul**

i. Law: (torah) means "teaching". God, motivated by love, reveals to
man basic insight into how to live with each other and how to approach God. Through the law God shows his interest in all aspects of man's life which is to be lived under his direction and care. Law of God stands parallel to word of the Lord to signify that law is the revelation of God's will (e.g., Isa. 1:10).

Specifically law refers to any set of regulations; . . . In this light law is often considered to consist of statutes, ordinances, precepts, commandments, and testimonies. (Hartley, TWOT, p. 404).

ii. Perfect: The fundamental idea is completeness. In ethical terms, it is that which it ethically sound, upright (Youngblood, TWOT, p. 974). It is "all-sided so as to cover completely all aspects of life" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182).

iii. Reviving the soul: it turns the whole person to God (Hartley, TWOT, p. 405); "a beneficial reviving effect that permeates the very life and soul of a converted child of God" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182).

c. His **statutes** are **trustworthy, making the simple wise**

   i. Statutes (or "testimony"): from a root meaning "to bear witness", it is always used of a testimony of God. It specifically designates the two tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments written on them. "The law of God is his testimony because it is his own affirmation relative to his very person and purpose" (Schultz, TWOT, pp. 649-50). The law is a reminder to man of what he is to do and where he has failed to do it (Leupold, Psalms, p. 181)

   ii. Trustworthy (or sure): It is a "foundation on which a man can unhesitatingly build" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182). At the heart of this term is the idea of certainty, including constancy. The net, when applied to God, is total dependability. It is the term from which "Amen" comes (Scott, TWOT, p. 52).

   iii. Making the simple wise: "imparting true heavenly wisdom to all who will keep their soul open to its effects" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182)

d. His **precepts** are **right, giving joy to the heart**

   i. Precepts: Used only in the Psalms, this "is a general term for the responsibilities God places on his people" (Hamilton, TWOT, p. 732).

   ii. Right: The root idea is to be level or straight. When used ethically, it refers to uprightness or blamelessness (Wiseman, TWOT, p. 417). "It maps out a straight course for any man that would be guided by it" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182).

   iii. Giving joy to the heart: implies deep and satisfying joys (Ibid.).

e. His **commands** are **radiant, giving light to the eyes**

   i. Commands: The particular conditions of God's covenant with men, used of the Ten Commandments in Exod. 24:12. In addition to being radiant (or pure), they are variously described as true (Ps. 119:151), reliable (Ps. 119:86), righteous (Ps. 119:172) (Hartley, TWOT, p. 757).
ii. Radiant (or "pure"): It is "... a product that has been thoroughly purified and is thus unadulterated; there are no unwholesome elements in it" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182).

iii. Giving light to the eyes: "it imparts a freshness and joy to the very looks of the eye" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182).

f. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever

i. Fear: not specifically referring to God's word, but the effect it should have on us.

ii. Pure (or "clean"): literally, it means clean or pure, metaphorically it refers to ethical blamelessness (Yamauchi, TWOT, p. 343-44).

iii. Enduring forever: it will never lose its value

g. The ordinances of the LORD are sure, and righteous altogether

i. Ordinances: The core concept is justice, though at least thirteen related but distinct aspects of this idea are found in the OT. The idea here is simply an ordinance of law (see Culver, TWOT, p. 949).

ii. Sure: the only noun in the series, it implies utter dependability (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182; see also Scott, TWOT, p. 52)

iii. Altogether righteous ("righteous every one"; Kidner, Psalms, p. 100): "it is the essence of true normalcy" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 182).

h. They are more desirable than wealth (much fine gold) or the sweetest food (honey dripping from the comb). This is because they show us how to live (which neither money nor food can do), and there is great reward in keeping them.

23. Psalms 33:4: For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.

God's word is right (see on Ps. 19:9) because it is built on His faithfulness. "Word" should be seen in its widest sense, "... whatever words He is known to have spoken for the good of the children of men, or for the creation of the world, or laid down for man's use in sacred Scriptures" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 273)

24. Psalm 78:5-7: He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, 6 so that the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. 7 Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

God did not give the law without purpose, or for a single generation only. It was meant to carry on from generation to generation in written form (to preserve accuracy). "A solid tradition of continuous transmission of God's word is thus to be established (v. 6) from generation to generation" (Leupold, Psalms, p. 564; see also Deut. 6:6-9)

25. Psalm 119:1-176: We present this magnificent Psalm without comment, and commend its careful reading! Note that the Psalm is an acrostic--every verse in a group of eight verses in Hebrew begins with the same Hebrew letters, going all the way through the Hebrew alphabet
(there are 22 groups of 8 verses each, making 176 verses). We have noted the letter that begins each group, and have omitted verse numbers for better reading flow:

:Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD. Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart. They do nothing wrong; they walk in his ways. You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed. Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees! Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands. I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws. I will obey your decrees; do not utterly forsake me.

:How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

:Do good to your servant, and I will live; I will obey your word. Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me. My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times. You rebuke the arrogant, who are cursed and who stray from your commands. Remove from me scorn and contempt, for I keep your statutes. Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees. Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors.

:I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your word. I recounted my ways and you answered me; teach me your decrees. Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then I will meditate on your wonders. My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word. Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me through your law. I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on your laws. I hold fast to your statutes, O LORD; do not let me be put to shame. I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.

:Teach me, O LORD, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word. Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared. Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good. How I long for your precepts! Preserve my life in your righteousness.

:May your unfailing love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise; then I will answer the one who taunts me, for I trust in your word. Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws. I will always obey your law, for ever and ever. I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. I will speak of your statutes before kings and will not be put to shame, for I delight in your commands because I love them. I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees.

:Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope. My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life. The arrogant mock me without restraint, but I do not turn from your law. I remember your ancient laws, O LORD, and I find comfort in them. Indignation grips me because of the wicked, who have forsaken your law. Your decrees are the theme of my song wherever I lodge. In the night I remember your name, O LORD, and I will keep your law. This has been my practice: I obey your precepts.
You are my portion, O LORD; I have promised to obey your words. I have sought your face with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise. I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands. Though the wicked bind me with ropes, I will not forget your law. At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws. I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts. The earth is filled with your love, O LORD; teach me your decrees.

Do good to your servant according to your word, O LORD. Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I believe in your commands. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees. Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep your precepts with all my heart. Their hearts are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law. It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees. The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands. May those who fear you rejoice when they see me, for I have put my hope in your word. I know, O LORD, that your laws are righteous, and in faithfulness you have afflicted me. May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant. Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight. May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me without cause; but I will meditate on your precepts. May those who fear you turn to me, those who understand your statutes. May my heart be blameless toward your decrees, that I may not be put to shame.

My soul faints with longing for your salvation, but I have put my hope in your word. My eyes fail, looking for your promise; I say, "When will you comfort me? " Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke, I do not forget your decrees. How long must your servant wait? When will you punish my persecutors? The arrogant dig pitfalls for me, contrary to your law. All your commands are trustworthy; help me, for men persecute me without cause. They almost wiped me from the earth, but I have not forsaken your precepts. Preserve my life according to your love, and I will obey the statutes of your mouth.

Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures. Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you. If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have preserved my life. Save me, for I am yours; I have sought out your precepts. The wicked are waiting to destroy me, but I will ponder your statutes. To all perfection I see a limit; but your commands are boundless.

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws. I have suffered much; preserve my life, O LORD, according to your word. Accept, O LORD, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me your laws. Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget your law. The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from your precepts. Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end.
I hate double-minded men, but I love your law. You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word. Away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commands of my God! Sustain me according to your promise, and I will live; do not let my hopes be dashed. Uphold me, and I will be delivered; I will always have regard for your decrees. You reject all who stray from your decrees, for their deceitfulness is in vain. All the wicked of the earth you discard like dross; therefore I love your statutes. My flesh trembles in fear of you; I stand in awe of your laws.

I have done what is righteous and just; do not leave me to my oppressors. Ensure your servant's well-being; let not the arrogant oppress me. My eyes fail, looking for your salvation, looking for your righteous promise. Deal with your servant according to your love and teach me your decrees. I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. It is time for you to act, O LORD; your law is being broken. Because I love your commands more than gold, more than pure gold, and because I consider all your precepts right, I hate every wrong path.

Your statutes are wonderful; therefore I obey them. The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. I open my mouth and pant, longing for your commands. Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name. Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me. Redeem me from the oppression of men, that I may obey your precepts. Make your face shine upon your servant and teach me your decrees. Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed.

Righteous are you, O LORD, and your laws are right. The statutes you have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy. My zeal wears me out, for my enemies ignore your words. Your promises have been thoroughly tested, and your servant loves them. Though I am lowly and despised, I do not forget your precepts. Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true. Trouble and distress have come upon me, but your commands are my delight. Your statutes are forever right; give me understanding that I may live.

I call with all my heart; answer me, O LORD, and I will obey your decrees. I call out to you; save me and I will keep your statutes. I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word. My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises. Hear my voice in accordance with your love; preserve my life, O LORD, according to your laws. Those who devise wicked schemes are near, but they are far from your law. Yet you are near, O LORD, and all your commands are true. Long ago I learned from your statutes that you established them to last forever.

Look upon my suffering and deliver me, for I have not forgotten your law. Defend my cause and redeem me; preserve my life according to your promise. Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek out your decrees. Your compassion is great, O LORD; preserve my life according to your laws. Many are the foes who persecute me, but I have not turned from your statutes. I look on the faithless with loathing, for they do not obey your word. See how I love your precepts; preserve my life, O LORD, according to your love. All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.

Rulers persecute me without cause, but my heart trembles at your word. I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great spoil. I hate and abhor falsehood but I love your law. Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws. Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble. I wait for your salvation, O LORD, and I follow your commands. I obey your statutes, for I love them greatly. I obey your precepts and your statutes, for all my ways are known to you.
May my cry come before you, O LORD; give me understanding according to your word. May my supplication come before you; deliver me according to your promise. May my lips overflow with praise, for you teach me your decrees. May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commands are righteous. May your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts. I long for your salvation, O LORD, and your law is my delight. Let me live that I may praise you, and may your laws sustain me. I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commands.

26. Psalms 130:5: I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope.

   It is in God's word that we are to put our hope. Of special significance in that regard are the many promises in His word--in them we may confidently put our hope.

27. Proverbs 8:7-8: My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness. 8 All the words of my mouth are just; none of them is crooked or perverse.

   a. In all likelihood, the writer thought of the words of wisdom (being spoken here) as God's words.
   
   b. God's words are totally reliable in all their parts. They cannot be improved, because nothing in them is twisted. Though the primary thought here concerns righteousness, the net result is that God's words are 100% reliable and "straight" (see Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", pp. 34-35)

   Bibliography from Isaiah to Malachi
   A. Scott Moreau

28. Isaiah 34:16: Seek from the book of the LORD, and read: Not one of these will be missing; none will lack its mate. For His mouth has commanded, and His Spirit has gathered them.

   a. Isaiah commands any who do not believe his prophecies to check out the exact information from his prophecies, for it will be 100% accurate. The immediate context is Isaiah's prophecies. However, the general principle of all Scripture being true and accurate may also be drawn from this (see Young, Isaiah, 2:442).
   
   b. Why will these prophecies come to pass? God's Spirit will accomplish the prophecy which He spoke through Isaiah about Edom. In that sense, the Holy Spirit is both the "author and fulfiller" of prophecy (Alexander, Isaiah, 2:32). God Himself backs up His word to ensure its accuracy, as Young notes:

      The spoken word is accompanied by the working of the Spirit, who makes the word effective. This is the true biblical picture of the word, a picture that is contrary to the common notion that in the word itself there resides a particular efficacy. (Young, Isaiah, 2:443)

29. Isaiah 40:7-8: The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

   God's word is permanent, in contrast to human flesh. "To God's word there is a permanent character. Unlike the flesh of man, which withers and fades, it stands forever. It rises up, stands, and endures. In contrast to all flesh with its perishable nature, the word of God is imperishable and endures forever. . . . When God speaks, His word expresses the truth; and that truth cannot be annulled or changed." (Young, Isaiah, p. 35)
30. Isaiah 59:21: "As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the LORD: "My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the LORD, "from now and forever."

a. God Himself has placed His words in Isaiah's mouth. In this case, Isaiah serves as the very mouthpiece of God.

b. In God's covenant with His people, the two elements (His Spirit and His words) may amount to:
   i. "Spirit-filled testimony" (Leupold, Isaiah, 2:305)
   ii. (Least likely) An anticipation of Christ, the "Word" of God (Grogan, "Isaiah", EBC, 6:327)
   iii. (Most likely) Prophetic revelation (e.g., the Bible). Young notes:

   The Lord is declaring that His eternal truth, revealed to man in words, is the peculiar possession of His people. . . . Today, the treasure of the Church is the Holy Scripture, the Word that cannot be broken, inerrant and infallible, the very truth of the eternal God. This Word and the Spirit will never depart from the Church, for the Church as the body of the Head is to declare the truth to all nations that the saving health of God may be seen by all. (Young, Isaiah, 3:442)

31. Isaiah 66:2: "Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word."

God honors the man who treats God's word as he would God Himself--"In terms of this text, it seems that to respond to God's word is to respond to God. Furthermore, 'trembling' suggests a complete acceptance of that word, an unwillingness to think of it unworthy or trust or obedience, and a refusal to challenge or call into question any of the word. To tremble before God's word is to submit to it and accept it, to believe it and obey it absolutely." (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 35)

32. Jeremiah 1:9-13, 17: Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. 10 See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant." 11 The word of the LORD came to me: "What do you see, Jeremiah?" "I see the branch of an almond tree," I replied. 12 The LORD said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled. 13 The word of the LORD came to me again: "What do you see?" "I see a boiling pot, tilting away from the north," I answered. . . . 17 "Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them."

a. Jeremiah is not the only prophet in the OT whose mouth God touched as a symbol of His prophetic office--Isaiah (6:6-7) and Ezekiel (2:9-3:3) also experienced this vindication.

b. "Jeremiah the prophet is clearly conscious of the fact that he has been inspired of God. The Lord has actually placed the words in his mouth, and he is told to speak 'unto them all that I command thee' (verse 17). God sees to it that the prophet utters what has been
revealed to him. Jeremiah is not permitted to develop the revealed message and present it in his own words. It does not come to him as a seed thought, to fructify in his own mind. Rather, the actual words which have been revealed are themselves of Divine origin, and it is these Divine words, these and no others, which Jeremiah is to declare." (Young, *Thy Word*, p. 42).

33. Jeremiah 8:9: The wise will be put to shame; they will be dismayed and trapped. Since they have rejected the word of the LORD, what kind of wisdom do they have?

Those who reject God's word do not have wisdom--even if the world considers them wise, they are fools for rejecting what their Maker says.

34. Jeremiah 15:16: When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.

Thompson remarks: "Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel [2:8-3:3] found that having accepted Yahweh's word, which at first seemed unpalatable, it became acceptable, to Jeremiah a joy . . . and a delight to his heart, and to Ezekiel 'as sweet as honey.'" (Thompson, *Jeremiah*, p. 396)

35. Daniel 9:2: in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

Daniel, writing in the late 6th to early 5th century (Baldwin, *Daniel*, pp. 35-46), considered Jeremiah's writings as Scripture. The word indicates a collection of writings, though we do not know what was included besides Jeremiah (Wood, *Daniel*, pp. 232-3).

36. Amos 3:8: The lion has roared--who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken--who can but prophesy?

a. The parallel structure is better seen if given in table format:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPEAKER</th>
<th>The lion</th>
<th>The LORD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESULT</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Prophecy</td>
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b. "'These are not my ideas, but words from God himself, which I simply must declare.' Such was the irresistible urge, and at times the almost intolerable burden, of being compelled to become the Lord's mouthpiece." (Stibbs, "Witness of Scripture", p. 113)

37. Zechariah 7:11-12: But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears. 12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.

a. It is God's Spirit who speaks His word through the prophets. Leupold notes, "There was, therefore, from days of old a correct and an adequate conception of inspiration as the work of God's Spirit" (Leupold, *Zechariah*, p. 139).
b. Zechariah is the first OT prophets to mention this concept of inspiration; it has no parallel in the other OT prophets (Baldwin, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, p. 147), though it is similar to Neh. 9:30.

BIBLIOLOGY IN THE GOSPELS

38. Matthew 4:4-10: Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.' " 7 Jesus answered him,"It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." 10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

a. A typical argument used against evangelicals is that we should not use "proof-texts" when trying to make theological points. Here we see valid precedent for accurately proof-texting a point which we wish to make in Jesus' response to Satan (see Young, Thy Word, p. 219).

b. All three quotes are from Deuteronomy. Each time the formula "It is written" is used. This is a common formula in the NT (about 70 times) to refer to the authoritative norm of the OT passage being cited (Mayer, "Scripture, Writing", NIDNTT 3:488). Mayer notes: "The many and various Bible quotations in the New Testament are not incidental ornament but its very foundation. The NT is built upon authoritative texts from the Hebrew Bible." (Ibid., p. 494) In addition to "It is written", a number of formula are used to introduce OT quotes, including Scripture says, the prophet(s), Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc. wrote, prophesied, warned, called, etc.

c. Jesus obviously had these passages memorized.

39. Matthew 5:17-18: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 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.

a. Jesus did not come to abolish (a term that can be used of the destruction of buildings, see Matt. 24:2; 26:61; 27:40) the Law or the Prophets. "The Law or the Prophets" certainly refers to the OT Scriptures

b. Rather, he came to "fulfill" them. What does this mean (discussion from Carson, "Matthew", EBC, 8:142-5)?

i. Some suggest "confirm" or "establish", but this should be rejected (Ibid., 8:142-3).

ii. Alternatively, some think that Jesus here refers only to the moral law, not to the ceremonial or civil, which are indeed abolished by Him.

iii. Jesus "fills up" the Law by providing its full, intended meaning.

iv. Jesus extends the demands to some better or more transcendent righteousness, such as the command to love.
v. Jesus fulfills them in that they point to Him, and he is their fulfillment. This is the normal sense of Matthew for "fulfill", and is the most likely interpretation. Two conclusions may be noted:

1. "Jesus is not primarily engaged [in vv. 21-48]... in extending, annulling, or intensifying OT law, but in showing the direction in which it points, on the basis of his own authority" (Ibid., 8:144)

2. The christological implications are important: Jesus is the eschatological goal of the OT, and is "its sole authoritative interpreter, the one through whom alone the OT finds its valid continuity and significance." (Ibid.)

c. In fact, Jesus upholds the OT to the highest possible degree (Carson, "Matthew", EBC, 8:145-6).

i. Not even the smallest letter or the least stroke of a pen will disappear until:

1. Heaven and earth pass away (i.e., until this present world age ceases)

2. All is accomplished (i.e., until the entire divine purpose of God as prophesied in Scripture is accomplished).

ii. Harris notes that Jesus is upholding not just verbal accuracy, but inspiration in the very letters of the Law (Harris, Inspiration, p. 46).

d. The divisions of the OT: The Jews of Jesus' day were not entirely dogmatic on the number of divisions in the OT. Jesus himself designates them differently, depending on the context:

i. The Law (Matthew 5:18)

ii. The Law and the Prophets (here)

iii. The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44).

40. Matthew 22:29 (Mark 12:24): Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.

The Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, are rebuked by Jesus for two reasons:

a. They do not know the Scriptures, which clearly teach the resurrection. In saying this, Jesus is recognizing the Scriptures as authoritative source of the answers to ultimate questions, even if they do not lay out the mechanics of how things will be accomplished.

b. They do not know God's power: God is not confined to their world view, and the "unanswerable" question that they used to confound the proponents of the resurrection does not take into account the power of God to raise us from the dead in a qualitatively different fashion from our earthly existence.

41. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

Jesus words carry the same authority as God's words, and are on par with the OT (see discussion in Harris, Inspiration, p. 47).
42. Matthew 26:54: "But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"
   a. Young states: "If Christ's utterance does not give evidence that He believed the Scriptures to be infallible, we are at a loss to understand its meaning. "Thus is must be,' it cannot conceivably be otherwise. There is no possibility of change. Scripture must be fulfilled." (Young, Thy Word, p. 52).
   b. Commenting on the same idea in Mark 14:49, he writes: "Why must these scriptures be fulfilled? The answer is that they are the Word of God. What they utter, according to our Lord, must in the very nature of the case come to fulfillment. There is no possible alternative. (Ibid.)
   c. Harris points out: "It is not too much to say that although Jesus declared that He came from heaven as the incarnate God, yet He was at the same time governed by Scripture and recognized that it also had come from heaven." (Harris, Inspiration, p. 59) We note that for Jesus to go against Scripture is for Him to go against His very nature, since Scripture is God's word and Jesus is God's Word incarnate.
   d. The idea of an event taking place to fulfill what an OT prophet had said is expressed no less than 13 times in Matthew, though rarely in the other gospels.

43. Mark 10:5: "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied.
   a. God has so directed Scripture that it takes into account our weaknesses as people. He does not approve of or desire divorce, but allowed it through Moses because of the hardness of people's hearts.
   b. Cranfield writes:

      In this and the following verses Jesus is not setting the commandment of God against that of Moses, nor is he brushing aside the scripture. Rather he is bringing out the real meaning of Deut. xxiv.I. A distinction has to be made between that which sets forth the absolute will of God, and those provisions which take account of men's actual sinfulness and are designed to limit and control its consequences. (Cranfield, Mark, p. 319)

44. Luke 11:47-50: "Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them. 48 So you testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs. 49 Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.' 50 Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world,

   Here we see the parallel functions of prophets (OT) and apostles (NT). The significance of this for us is the test of canonicity of the NT, which is apostolic authorship, not just prophetic.

45. Luke 16:16-17 (see also Matt. 5:17-18 and 11:13): "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. 17 It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law."
Matthew notes that the Law and the Prophets prophesied until John—the entire OT serves in a prophetic function, not just the Prophets. See also the discussion on "fulfill" in Matthew 5:17-18 above. This again points to the chief function of the OT (within the framework of Matthew): it points to Jesus and the Kingdom of God (its advance is what was prophesied about; Carson, "Matthew", EBC, 8:268).

46. Luke 16:29-31: "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' 30 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' 31 'He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

Scripture is the ultimate voice from the "beyond"; we do not need someone from the dead to come to us (Harris, Inspiration, p. 57). Further, those whose hearts are set against God's word will not be swayed by a miraculous sign from the dead (Liefeld, "Luke", EBC, 8:992).

47. Luke 24:19-27; 32: "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn't find his body. The came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." 25 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

32 They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

a. Jesus rebuked the disciples because they did not believe all that the prophets had spoken.

b. He then used all the Scriptures to teach them about Himself (v. 27). We must not use the Scriptures selectively (Liefeld, "Luke", EBC, 8:1053). Grudem notes, "Although it is difficult to define the limits of the Old Testament canon from the data within the Old Testament itself, it is not difficult to demonstrate that for first-century Jews the canon of the Old Testament included exactly the books of the Protestant OT Testament today. It is 'all' of these that are said to speak about Christ." (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 44).

c. Several things may be noted (Liefeld, "Luke", EBC, 8:1053):

i. The sufferings of Christ, as well as his glory, were prophesied in the OT

ii. We see here the way the writers of the NT used the OT had its origin in the postresurrection teachings of Jesus.

iii. Though Luke does not quote as many OT Scriptures as Matthew, we see here the importance he places on the OT, and that he uses it for "employing a 'proof-from-prophecy- apologetic for the truth of the gospel".
d. The disciples reminisced on their reactions to Jesus' exposition: they were "burning" ("an uncontrollable longing to speak or pray, usually in a situation of distress; something more than mere elation or ardour"; Marshall, Luke, p. 899).

48. Luke 24:44: He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

This is the only place in the NT that the Psalms are names along with the Law of Moses. They may stand for the Writings, which was a third division of the OT in Jewish reckoning (see Marshall, Luke, p. 905). As with Luke 24:27, all of the OT is useful, and all is to be fulfilled in Christ.

49. John 1:17: For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

a. First, we note Jesus' testimony to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Note, however, that the Law came through Moses--God is the ultimate author.

b. Law came through Moses, grace and truth through Jesus: "The material in the New Testament is fuller than the Old Testament in its declaration of the explanation of things of our redemption." (Harris, Inspiration, p. 199).

c. Truth: (        ) meaning true in the sense of "real" or "genuine". Nearly half of all the occurrences of aletheia in the NT are found in John's writings. Barrett remarks:

retains in John more of the meaning of . Sometimes, as in ordinary Greek usage, it means simply that which corresponds to fact, is not false (5.33, 8.40, 44 ff.; 16.7); but more characteristically it means the Christian revelation brought by and revealed in Jesus (1.17; 8.32; 16.13; 17.17; 17.19 (unless here =  ); 18.37; 1.14; 4.23 f. should perhaps be added). This revelation arises out of the faithfulness of God to his own character, and to his promises, of which it is the fulfillment. It is saving truth (8.23); it is perceived only through the work of the Spirit (16.13), and by those who are predestined in conformity with it (3.21, ...). Furthermore, this truth is Jesus himself, who being God (1.1) is the fulfillment and revelation of God's purposes (14.6). (Barrett, John, p. 167)

50. John 5:39-47: You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life. 41 I do not accept praise from men, 42, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. 43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. 44 How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God? 45 But do not think that I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. 46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. 47 But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?

a. The Jews searched the Scriptures (can be either indicative or imperative; the former is almost virtually certain to be the case--Barrett, John, p. 267), but still refused to believe them! Though the Bible is true, it is possible to read the truth--even to diligently search it and reverence it--but to still not believe the teachings it gives (Harris, Inspiration, p. 58).
b. In searching the Scriptures, the Jews were looking for life. Their mistake was to think of the Scriptures as an end in themselves, rather than realizing that they point to Christ (Barrett, John, pp. 267-8). Martin notes: The words of Scripture were not an end in themselves; their function was to point. They were the testament, not the estate. They contained the prescription for eternal life, but they themselves bore not the leaves of the tree of life. It was the distinction, now recognized by all linguists, between the sign and the thing signified, the vehicle of the meaning and the thing meant." (Martin, "Special Revelation", p. 71).

c. Again, we see Jesus' confirmation of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (v. 47). In this case, Jesus notes that Moses, author of the Scriptures the Jews searched, stands in witness against them for their unbelief. In the same was, the Scriptures today stand in testimony against those who do not believe them.

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

a. Young comments: "The concept of breaking a law is one that is clearly comprehended. If a man breaks a law, he is guilty and so liable to punishment. When he breaks the law, the lawbreaker treats the law as nonexistent, and in effect annuls it. The Scriptures, however, possess an authority so great that they cannot be broken. What they say will stand and cannot be annulled or set aside. If the Scripture speaks, the issue is settled once and for all; it cannot be broken. Since the Scriptures cannot be broken, so our Lord's argument runs, these particular words, which form part of the Scriptures, likewise cannot be broken. . . . He might have said 'this scripture is true,' or 'this particular scripture cannot be broken.' Instead, He makes an assertion about the Scriptures as a whole: The scripture as a whole cannot be broken. This one example makes it clear that every part of Scripture, even to minute details and particulars, is of such authority that it cannot be broken." (Young, Thy Word, p. 27).

b. Commentators have noted that this is not a particularly significant OT passage ("a run-of-the-mill passage", Morris, John, p. 526). The implication is important:

    Now, what is the particular thing in Scripture, for which the confirmation of which the indefectible authority of Scripture is thus invoked? It is one of its most casual clauses--more than that, the very form of its expression in one of its most casual clauses. This means, of course, that in the Saviour's view the indefectible authority of Scripture attaches to the very form of expression and its most casual clauses. *It belongs to Scripture through and through, down to its most minute particulars, that it is of indefectible authority.* (Warfield, Inspiration, p. 140; emphasis mine; see similar reasoning in Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 50)

c. That the Scripture cannot be broken means "Scripture cannot be emptied of its force by being shown to be erroneous" (Morris, John, p. 527) or "annulled, made void" (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p.50).

d. Whether or not this is taken as an *ad hominem* (i.e., Jesus is using his opponents' own argument against them) argument seems, in large part, dependent on the view of Scripture of the commentator (see Warfield's discussion, Inspiration, pp. 140-1).
52. John 14:26: But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

a. Here, Jesus stresses the Spirit's function of teacher of the church (Morris, John, p. 656). He will remind them of all that Jesus (in "everything I have said", the "I" is emphatic) said.

b. His job of bringing to the memory all that Jesus said (probably meaning "all that you will need to know"; Morris, John, p. 656) should probably be limited to the Twelve. They, in turn, wrote down all that was significant for us to know, which is embodied in our NT. They did this under the Spirit's direction (see Harris, Inspiration, p. 232).

c. "He will teach you all things" is literally "That one (ekteinos) will teach you all things". The pronoun "that one" is not grammatically necessary, and, especially following the neuter pneuma, it reminds us of the personality of the Spirit (Morris, John, p. 656, n. 70; see also Brown, John, p. 650).

53. John 17:17: Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

a. Our sanctification is not accomplished apart from divine revelation, which it not just true, but truth itself (Morris, John, p. 731).

b. "The use of the noun aletheia suggests that God's Word is here viewed not just as something that conforms to some other standard of truth but as being itself the final and ultimate standard against which all other claims to truthfulness must be tested. (2 Timothy 2:15 and James 1:18 call scripture the 'word of truth.')" (Grudem, Scripture's Self-Attestation, p. 366, n. 75)

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**Excursus: Jesus' View of Scripture**

1. In order to fully understand Christ's view on the authority of Scripture, it will be helpful to try first to understand His overall view of Scripture, and from there determine His specific view relating to its authority. In this regard, there are at least ten aspects I could find that can be seen which either explicitly or implicitly show us Christ's view of Scripture, and a brief discussion of these will help in synthesizing His view of its authority.


(Luke 24:44-47), and thus it can be seen that it was used by Christ as a verification of His assertions of Himself and His office as Messiah. Scriptures, then is the authoritative judge of His Messianic claims.


d. Christ taught (at least implicitly) that Scriptures speaks of actual historical events (Matt. 10:15; 11:21-23; 12:3-8, 39-42; 16:4; 19:4-5; 24:38-39; Mark 2:25-28; 10:3-8; Luke 4:25; 6:3-5; 10:13-14; 11:29-32; 13:14; 17:25-32, John 3:14; 6:32-33; 7:19). While this does not necessarily mean that Jesus taught the authority of Scripture in relating historical events, it can be seen that He did teach that what the Scriptures taught as historical was in fact historical, and not merely myth or allegory.

e. Jesus taught that the Scriptures are available to us for learning truths of faith, conduct and history (Matt. 9:13; 21:42-44; 22:29-32; Mark 12:10-11, 24-27; Luke 6:3-5; 16:27-31; 17:28-32; 20:17-18, 34-38; John 5:39-46). Not only are the Scriptures authoritative in regard to doctrine and conduct, but they are also instructive and can be understood by us in what they teach.


g. Jesus taught that the Scriptures are God's words to men (Matt.15:3-7; 19:4-5; 22:29-32; Mark 7:6-13; 10:3-8; 12:24-27; Luke 11:28; 20:34-38), even though God used men to actually write them and pass them on to others (Matt. 8:4; 13:14; 22:43-45; 26:56; Mark 1:44; 12:35-37; 14:49; Luke 5:14; 20:41-44; 16:27-31; 24:25-27, 44-47; John 5:39-46; 7:19). Though written down by men, the Scriptures are God's words and thus are as authoritative as He is.

h. The Scriptures are prophetic and what they say must come to pass in complete detail (Matt. 11:13-14; 13:14; 15:3-7; 17:10-12; 26:31; Mark 7:6-13; 9:12-13; 14:27; Luke 16:16; 21:22; John 13:18; 15:25; 6:44-45, all of which refer to human history apart from the Messianic prophecy; for that aspect see discussion above in regard to the Scriptures fulfilled in Christ). Thus the Scriptures are authoritative in regard to future events, and teach as God's plan for future history.

i. Christ saw His understanding of the Scriptures as authoritative (Matt. 5:17-44; 19:17-19; Luke 16:17; 22:37; John 5:39-46; 10:34-36). In that sense we see that not only did the Scriptures bear witness of Christ, but He bore witness of them. Thus we are to see Christ's view and understanding of the Scriptures as correct, and that His authority
verified their authority.

j. Christ taught that the Scriptures would not pass away before this world does (Matt. 5:17-19; Luke 16:17; John 10:34-36), that they were inspired by the Holy Spirit, who wrote through men (Matt. 22:43-45), and that they could not be broken (John 10:34-36). As such, they maintain their authority for as long as this world lasts, and are to be trusted because it is the Spirit who inspired them.

2. In summary, then we can see that Christ viewed the Scriptures as endowed with authority over men. They are our authority in regard to teaching and doctrine, to the Messianic Claims of Christ, to our life and conduct, to our mores and cultural values and to future events. While He did not explicitly teach their authority in relating past historical events, He did affirm that those events were in reality history and not merely myth or fable. As God's word to men, they were written by men who wrote truth as inspired by the Holy Spirit, and can be understood by men who seek after the truth. Their witness to Christ and His teachings will last as long as this world does, so that men of all ages may have the reliable source of revealed knowledge. Finally, just as the Scriptures verified Christ, in reciprocal fashion He verified Scripture, and thus we are to see the Scriptures as fully authoritative for us today, as they were for Christ and His generation 2000 years ago.

17. John 19:35: The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you may believe.

a. "Here John means that what he says is true or factually accurate, for he speaks as an eyewitness; and that his form of presentation is 'ideal' (Gk. alethinos), in harmony with, and an adequate expression of, the true meaning and value of the events thus recorded," (Stibbs, "Witness of Scripture", p. 117).

b. Plummer notes: S. John first says that his evidence is adequate; then he adds that the contents of it are true. Testimony may be sufficient (e.g., of a competent eyewitness) but false: or it may be insufficient (e.g., of a half-witted child) but true. S. John declares that his testimony is both sufficient and true." (Plummer, cited by Morris, John, p. 820, n.95). John's testimony about Christ (contained in his gospel) is a sufficient and true account.

18. John 20:31: But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

As was noted in the comments on John 5:39-47, the Scriptures are not an end in themselves--they point to Christ, and were written so the we may believe and have life in Christ. Thus, they stand as a testimony of the love and mercy of God, who has not left Himself without an eternal witness of our needs and His supply.

19. John 21:25: Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

In the Bible, God has given us as much as we need to know, but he had nowhere near exhausted all that could have been written. Indeed, even if the Bible did contain a complete account of the life of Christ, is could never expound Him to use fully, for deity cannot be fully comprehended by flesh. This serves as a reminder of our own limitations.
20. Acts 1:2: until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

The apostles are those to whom Jesus gave instructions for the church. This is another indicator that they have taken over the role of the OT prophet.

21. Acts 2:23: This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

Jesus was handed over according to God's set purpose, which (as we see repeatedly in the Gospels) He set forth in the Scriptures. Even though these men were acting of their own will, and bear the responsibility for their actions, they were acting in accordance with God's will. If this be the case, we can see how God could inspire the biblical authors to write of their own will, and yet, at the same time, write exactly what He had planned for them to write.

22. James 1:18: He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

a. One of God's good gifts (v. 17) is to "give us birth through the word of truth".

b. To what 'birth' does this refer? Moo gives three options (James, p. 76; see also Davids, James, p. 89):
   i. The birth of humankind by God's creative word, or
   ii. The birth of Israel, or
   iii. The birth of Christians (favoured by Moo, James, p. 76 and Osborne, "James", p. 11).

c. What is the "word of truth"? Most likely, in line with the birth referring to Christians being born again, it refers to the gospel (Moo, James, p. 77), which is thus characterized by truth. Thus, God's word can hardly be considered "dead" propositions. While it is fully truth, and conforms to propositional reality in that sense, it is the instrument God has used to effect a new birth in us.

23. James 1:22-25: Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

a. Principle (v. 22): "Christianity is an active, dynamic force which must be lived" (Osborne, "James", p. 14)
   i. "Prove yourselves" doers is in the present tense, implying continuous action.
   ii. Those who do not do the word delude themselves (the only other appearance of
this term in the NT is in Col. 2:4, where it refers to leading one astray from the faith). This idea here, then, is probably that one who does not do the word deludes himself in thinking that he has even received it (from v. 21; Davids, *James*, p. 97; see also Luke 11:28 and Romans 2:13).

b. Illustration of looking in a mirror (vv. 23-25; compare 1 Cor. 13:12).

i. The basic meaning of the illustration: "The person who hears without doing has only a temporary thing; after he has heard he has nothing" (Osborne, "James", p. 14).

ii. The man who does not do the word is like one who looks in a mirror and then quickly turns away ("Just a glance and he is off", Mayor, *James*, p. 72). He sees himself as he really is (for the mirror does not lie), but turns away quickly from that view.

iii. The "hearer only" person is contrasted with the "doer", who gazes intently at "the perfect law" (dropping the metaphor, which would have read "gazes intently at the mirror"). James is not contrasting one who hastily looks at his image in a mirror with one who gazes intently at the mirror. He is simply saying that the one who does not do the word is like a person looking in a mirror, which gives only a temporary benefit. The doer, however, perseveres, and shows in his life the continuing result of his acting out what the word has taught him (see Moo, *James*, pp. 82-3).

iv. Here, James calls the law "perfect". To what does this refer? The "law of liberty" indicates that it might not be the OT law by itself, but the gospel (Moo, p. 84; which is the fulfillment of that law). It thus is the same as the "word of truth" in 1:18, and may have particular reference to Jesus' ethical teachings (Moo, *James*, p. 84).

24. James 2:8-10: If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11 For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a law-breaker.

a. The law demands impartiality (vv. 8-9).

i. The link to 1-7 is in the term "however", which may be translated in one of two ways:

(1) "However", which might indicate that "if you fulfill" is either:

(a) A statement given by the readers as an excuse: "If (you say) you fulfill"--they might say that they favour the rich in order to "fulfill" the Law (cited by Osborne, "James", p. 20), or

(b) A contrast to 6a ("you do evil in dishonoring the poor; . . . however, if you fulfill the royal law you do well", Moo, *James*, p. 93).
ii. What is the "royal law"? It could be either:

1. The OT law, or
2. "The whole law as interpreted and handed over to the church in the teaching of Jesus, i.e., the sovereign rule of God's kingdom," (Davids, *James*, p. 114).

iii. Our neighbour, as Jesus showed, is anyone we come into contact with (Luke 10:29-37).

iv. James can now draw a conclusion: those who show partiality are sinners (violating the royal law to love their neighbours), and stand convicted under that law.

b. Violation of one law violates all law (vv. 10-11).

i. James uses a Rabbinic argument to explain why the violation of the law in regard to showing partiality makes the violator a "transgressor" under the law.

ii. The law is indivisible--it is upheld or violated as a unit. Breaking one part puts one at odds with all of it (Moo, *James*, p. 95).

iii. Does this apply to every aspect of the OT law (including the ceremonial)? No, because:

1. James is talking about the "royal" law as described above.

2. While he uses a typical Jewish form of argument, he makes some changes in it. Usually, in this framework, the Jewish commentator would cite a petty law and compare it to a "major" one. James, however, cites two "major" laws from the Ten Commandments. He is thinking in New Covenant terms, not Pharisaic nit-picking (see Moo, *James*, p. 96).

3. Note vv. 12-13, in which he commands the readers to act as those "judged by the law of liberty"--i.e., not in a Pharisaic manner (Osborne, "James", p. 21).

25. Acts 13:27: The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath.

Though they acted without reference to the Scriptures, the Jewish rulers acted in complete accordance with it!

26. Galatians 3:8: The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."

When Paul states "The Scripture says", it is "a figure of speech for the thought that the
divine foresight is expressed in the scripture in question" (Burton, Galatians, p. 160). It is
equivalent to "The Lord of Scripture says" (Cole, Galatians, p. 93), seen clearly in the
second "action" of Scripture, which is that of announcing to Abraham the statement made
by God in Genesis 12:3.

27. Galatians 3:16-19: The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture
does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one
person, who is Christ. 17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not
set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. 18
For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God
in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. 19. What, then, was the purpose of the
law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred
had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.

a. We will not examine Paul's argument, but rather note that it depends on the difference
between a singular and a plural in the OT. Certainly Paul thought of the OT as
verbally accurate to build his argument on this "unimportant" distinction. As
Erickson states, "Since the New Testament writers considered these Old Testament
minutiae authoritative (i.e., as what God himself said), they obviously regarded the
choice of words and even the form of the words as having been guided by the Holy
Spirit." (Erickson, Christian Theology, p. 213)

b. Lest we overstate our case, we should also note Guthrie's comments: "Is Paul's
argument valid from a merely grammatical feature? At first it seems not only strange
but strangely unlike Paul to deduce so much from such a narrow basis. From a logical
point of view the singular could as easily denote plurality (considered collectively) as
the plural, just as the English word 'seed.' An argument of this kind may savor of
illegitimately fine distinctions. And yet Paul is not basing a truth on a small point of
grammar. He has a deep spiritual appraisal of the real nature of Abraham's covenant.
It was point to its fulfillment in Christ (Ridderbos). Grammar was but indirectly
supporting a truth which had already dawned on the apostle as the real essence of the
promise." (Guthrie, Galatians, p. 102).

28. Acts 17:2: As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he
reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

When Paul wanted to show Christ as the expectation of the Jews, He did so from the
Scriptures.

29. Acts 17:11: Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they
received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if
what Paul said was true.

The Bereans were of noble character (or were more open-minded; see Bruce, Acts, p. 327,
n. 27) because the checked Paul's statements with the Scriptures.

30. Acts 17:27-28: God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and
find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 28 'For in him we live and move and
have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

a. In terms of the quote from secular Greek, Berkouwer notes:
Surely this is something more than a confession of creation after God's image, and likely the heathen poet had intended 'his offspring' in a pantheistic way. But Paul seized upon this word to remind them of the dealings of God, that it had been established that men should seek God, if haply they should find him, though he was not far from every one of us (Acts 17:27). Man--also heathen man--is in all circumstances and thoughts of his life not freed from God. He is involved in God, and this fact is apparent also in his religion and morality. He cannot be freed from the revelation of God, even less from the command of God--from the (for him) not entirely hidden goodness of God's command and ordinances. (Berkouwer, "General and Special Divine Revelation", p. 20).

b. Paul is not approving the theology of the whole sections he quotes from, but showing how a basic truth is captured in the statements (see Bruce, Acts, p. 339).

Excursus: General Revelation
(adapted from Erickson, Christian Theology, pp. 153-74)

1. General revelation may be defined as "God's self-manifestation through nature, history, and the inner being of the human person" (Ibid., p. 154). It is available to all people at all times, and is less particular in content than special revelation.

2. The loci of general revelation:
   a. Nature (Ps. 19:1-6; 139:14; Acts 14:15-17; Rom. 1:18-21): God has left a witness of Himself in His amazing created order. This ranges from the beauty of a rainbow to the complexity of man.
   b. History: God's self-disclosure is not as clearly seen in history as it is in nature, for no person has a fully objective view of history and its direction. One example often cited in this regard is God's preservation of Israel through history, in spite of large-scale opposition and attempted genocide.
   c. Man: God also discloses Himself in man. This may be seen in:
      i. Physical structure (and complexity)
      ii. Mental capabilities (and the brain/mind dualism)
      iii. His moral and spiritual qualities, especially as seen in his reflections on the created order and the Creator of that order

3. The reality and effect of general revelation: several contrasting options
   a. Natural theology (seen in Thomas Aquinas)
      i. "It maintains not only that there is a valid, objective revelation of God in such spheres as nature, history, and human personality, but that it is actually possible to gain some true knowledge of God from these spheres--in other words, to construct a natural theology apart from the Bible." (Ibid., p. 156)
      ii. It is based on several assumptions
(1) There is an objective, valid, and rational general revelation
(2) The integrity of the person perceiving and learning from creation
(3) The congruity between the human mind and the creation around us
(4) The validity of the laws of logic

b. Denial of general revelation (see in Karl Barth). Based on his concept of revelation, Barth denied that any revelation occurs outside of Christ. His presuppositions include (Ibid., p. 166):

i. God's revelation is exclusively in Jesus Christ
ii. Genuine revelation is always responded to positively, rather than being ignored or rejected
iii. Knowledge of God is always redemptive or salvific in nature.

c. General revelation exists, but is not sufficient to use as a foundation for 'natural' theology (the Calvinist position): "God has given us an objective, valid, rational revelation of himself in nature, history, and human personality. It is there for anyone who wants to observe it. Regardless of whether anyone actually observes it, understands it, and believes it, it is nonetheless present. Although it may well have been disturbed by the fall of man, it is objectively present."

i. In it, man can see his need for God, but, because of man's sin, his perception is distorted and he all too often denies his need. Thus, it is not possible to construct a full-scale 'natural' theology with which all mankind will agree.

ii. General revelation is not sufficient for salvation in-and-of itself.

4. Implications of general revelation (Ibid., pp. 173-4):

a. There is a common ground or a point of contact between the believer and the nonbeliever, or between the gospel and the thinking of the unbeliever. All persons have a knowledge of God.

b. There is a possibility of some knowledge of divine truth outside the special revelation. We may understand more about the specially revealed truth by examining the general revelation. We understand in more complete detail the greatness of God, we comprehend more fully the image of God in man, when we attend to the general revelation. This should be considered a supplement to, not a substitute for, special revelation.

c. God is just in condemning those who have never heard the gospel in the full and formal sense. No one is completely without opportunity. All have known God, if they have not effectually perceived him, it is because they have suppressed the truth. Thus all are responsible.

d. General revelation serves to explain the worldwide phenomenon of religion and religions.

e. Since both creation and the gospel are intelligible and coherent revelations of God, there is harmony between the two, and mutual reinforcement of one by the other.

f. Genuine knowledge and genuine morality in unbelieving (as well as believing) man
are not his own accomplishment. Truth arrived at apart from special revelation is still
God's truth. Knowledge and morality are not so much discovery as they are
'uncovery' of the truth God has structured into his entire universe, both physical and
moral.

12. 1 Thessalonians 2:13: And 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.

a. Young writes, "What a remarkable verse this is! How mad Paul would have been to
speak of his message to the Thessalonians in this way, if he were no uttering the
solemn truth! If Paul were speaking the truth, then he was conscious that the Holy
Ghost was within him, and that the words which he had so earnestly and sincerely
proclaimed were not his own but the very Word of God. If he were not speaking the
truth then he was, of course, the worst possible sort of impostor. In Paul's words,
however, there rings a depth of earnestness which makes it clear he was no deceiver.
He was conscious of setting forth the very truth which God had given him: and this
Word, he says, worketh effectually in those that hear and receive it. Can there be any
doubt that Paul is here represented as an inspired teacher, one who is setting forth
precisely what God has given to him?" (Young, Thy Word, p. 44)

b. Morris concurs, "Fundamental to Paul's preaching was the conviction that what he
spoke was not his own message but God's . . . His drive and forcefulness came not
from some thought that he was abreast of contemporary trends in philosophy or
religion or science, but the deep-seated conviction that he was simply God's
mouthpiece, and that what he spoke was the veritable word of God." (Morris,
Thessalonians, p. 87)

c. How far may Paul's words be identified with God's? Best remarks, "This is not an
identification of Paul's words, word by word, with God's word as if he were an
infallible and verbally inspired channel, but a statement that the gospel which Paul
preached . . . was God's good news" (Best, Thessalonians, pp. 111-2), but I feel that
he overstates his position. Paul's identification is not qualified in any way, and so it
appears more likely that he is claiming that what he says is infallible. Note that, in the
original, emphasis is placed on the idea that it is God's word (Bruce, Thessalonians,
p. 44).

Excursus: the NT as God's Words
(from Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", pp. 45-49)

Did the NT authors consider their writings equal to the OT in authority? Three pieces of
evidence may be noted:

1. The NT authors thought is possible for God to speak directly to people in human language
18:9-10; 23:11; 26:14-18; Rev. 1:11-3:22).

2. The is also abundant evidence of God's speech through human lips (Matt. 5:22; 10:19-20;
3. But did they think that they wrote with the same authority as the OT? While it will be impossible to prove this for the entire NT, we may note passages which show us that at least sections carried this authority: John 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:13; 14:37-38; 1 Thess. 4:15; 1 Tim. 5:18; 2 Pet. 3:2, 16; Rev. 22:18-19 (all of which are discussed by Grudem).

13. 1 Thessalonians 5:27: I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.
   a. Best indicates that the primary idea is that the epistle is to be read aloud in public so that any whom might be illiterate will not miss the chance to hear what Paul says (Best, Thessalonians, pp. 246-7). Eventually this became a regular practice in the early church, and only canonical Scriptures were read in this way (Morris, Thessalonians, NICNT, p. 185).
   b. What is the significance? Two opinions may be noted:
      i. Stonehouse writes, "Inasmuch as he is conscious, as an apostle, of speaking with the authority of the Lord, it is not surprising that in the Epistle commonly judged to be his earliest he already adjures his readers" to have it read to all the brothers (Stonehouse, "Special Revelation", pp. 84-5)
      ii. Best, on the other hand, feels that "there is no suggestion that it forms 'canonical Scripture' or is to be put on a par with the reading and use of the O.T. or even to be retained for regular reading" (Best, Thessalonians, p. 247).

14. 2 Thessalonians 2:15: So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.
   a. The Thessalonians are to hold fast to the teachings (or traditions) passed on to them. This obviously does not refer to Rabbinic teachings per se, but to those which were passed on directly by the Apostles.
   b. Apostolic authority is equal whether the instructions are delivered verbally or in written form (Bruce, Thessalonians, p. 194). If Paul has any particular writing in mind, it would most likely be 1 Thessalonians.

15. 1 Corinthians 4:6: Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, "Do not go beyond what is written." Then you will not take pride in one man over against another.
   a. This is a notoriously difficult passage to interpret. The translation is clear, but the meaning is not. Fee, with others, concludes, "Here is a case where the apostle and his readers were on a wavelength that will probably be forever beyond our ability to pick up." (Fee, Corinthians, p. 169)
   b. The options seem to be (from Ibid., pp. 168-9):
i. "Live according to Scripture." If this is the case, what Scripture is Paul telling them to live by?

(1) The specific scriptures that Paul has cited in chapters 1-3 (Fee marginally prefers this option)

(2) The OT in some general way.

ii. "Do not go beyond what is written" is a proverb, meaning, "Keep within the rules".

c. For bibliological purposes, the meaning is so ambiguous that we really do not have anything to be dogmatic about.

16. 2 Corinthians 12:12: The things that mark an apostle--signs, wonders and miracles--were done among you with great perseverance.

a. If Paul is referring to the Corinthians own words or expectations (i.e., they expected certain "signs" from one who claimed to be an apostle), then he is merely noting that he met their expectations. This would not be any absolute indicator or test for apostleship (Barrett, Corinthians, pp. 320-1).

b. If, on the other hand, Paul is noting a common understanding, then the NT apostle had certain things that marked him as an apostle (Hughes, Corinthians, p. 456), which were the types of things performed by the OT prophet. Note that Paul does not say he performed such miracles--only that they were executed in the presence of the Corinthians.

17. Romans 1:1-2: Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God-- 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures

The Scriptures are holy (the only time this adjective is used of the Scriptures, though the Law is called holy by Paul by Rom. 7:12; Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 56, n. 5); "To Paul these Scriptures are holy because they partake of the character of Him who spoke their very word." (Young, Thy Word, p. 45)

18. Romans 1:20-21: 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. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

a. The self-revelation of God has been manifest since the creation of the world.

b. It is through God's visible creation that His invisible attributes are clearly displayed.

c. As a result, men have no excuse for denying God. "The result of God's self-manifestation in His creation is not a natural knowledge of God on men's part independent of God's self-revelation in His Word, a valid though limited knowledge, but simply the excuselessness of men in their ignorance." (Cranfield, Romans, ICC,
19. Romans 2:12-16: All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. 13 For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. 14 (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, 15 since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) 16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

a. Cranfield holds that "Gentiles" (v. 14) refers to Gentile Christians who have the Law written on their hearts (v. 15, as a fulfillment of Jer. 31:33), and translates v. 14, "For when Gentiles who do not possess the law by nature" (i.e. by virtue of their births as Gentiles). He feels that this does not teach about unbelievers but about believers from a non-Jewish background (Cranfield, Romans, ICC, 153-163).

b. The more standard interpretation is that Paul shows how Gentiles, who do not have the Law, are not judged by its standards (see, for example, Hodge, Bruce, and Murray).

c. A crucial point in understanding what Paul is saying is made by Murray:

   It needs to be noted, however, that at this point the apostle restricts himself to the judgment of condemnation. And this advises us that he is dealing now with the equity of God's judgement of damnation as it is brought to bear upon men who fall into these two categories. This is significant. Whatever is meant by those who are "without law" there is no suggestion to the effect that any who are "without law" attain to the reward of eternal life. (Murray, Romans, p. 69; see also Hodge, Romans, p. 53)

This point weighs heavily in favour of considering v. 14 to refer to pagan Gentiles.

d. This passage shows that the Gentiles, even though they do not have the Law, do "by nature" ("instinctively", NASB) things of the Law. Paul is not saying that they fulfill the Law, but only that they do show an adherence to some of it. This is seen further in the statement that the "work of the Law" (NOT the Law itself,) is written on their hearts; this is not a quote of Jeremiah 31:33 (contra Cranfield). The basic sense is that their consciences will bear witness together with the things of the Law written in their hearts to accuse or excuse them. The final result, seen in v. 12, appears to be condemnation due to the fact that no one is able to follow even the general revealing of God that he/she has in his/her heart. Hodge summarizes the section as follows:

   The heathen are not to be judged by a revelation of which they never heard. But as they enjoy a revelation of the divine character in the works of creation, chap. i. 19, 20, and of the rule of duty in their own hearts, vers. 14, 15, they are inexcusable. They can no more abide the test by which they are to be tried, than we can stand the application of the severer rule by which we are to be judged. Both classes, therefore, need a Saviour, ver. 12. (Hodge, Romans, p. 58)

20. Romans 2:20: an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth--
a. The Law is the "embodiment of knowledge and truth": "knowledge and truth in a form which can be grasped, expressed clearly and understandably" (Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 167).

b. "The Jew is persuaded that in the (book of the) law he has truth in visible form. Paul does not disagree with him; he himself says little less in vii.12, 14." (Barrett, Romans, p. 56; cited by Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 167, n. 4).

Excursus: The Inerrancy of Scripture

1. What do we mean by "inerrancy"?
   a. "By this word we mean that the Scriptures possess the quality of freedom from error. They are exempt from the liability to mistake, incapable of error. In all their teachings they are in perfect accord with the truth." (Young, Thy Word, p. 113).
   b. Note that inerrancy is essentially doxological--"it is a confession of faith in the nature and character of God and consequently in the nature of Scripture as God's Word" (Brown, "The Arian Connection", p. 389).

2. Because of the modern confusion over the word "inerrancy", it will be worth our time to discuss what inerrancy does not mean (from Pat Flynn):
   a. Inerrancy does not mean similarity of style throughout the Scripture, even by a given author.
   b. Inerrancy does not require word for word agreement in parallel accounts, though they do not contradict each other.
   c. Inerrancy does not mean the absence of figures of speech or phenomenological language (e.g., "the sun rose").
   d. Inerrancy does not support a mechanical dictation theory of inspiration.
   e. Inerrancy does not apply to the various versions and translations of the Bible, only to the original autographs.
   f. Inerrancy does not mean the absence of grammatical irregularities.

3. The short statement in the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy is worth noting:
   a. God, who is himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.
   b. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.
   c. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward
witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.

d. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.

e. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

4. Is there room for a "limited inerrancy"? Some evangelicals propose that we limit inerrancy either to "revealed matters" (Fuller, "Warfield's View") or to matters essential for salvation (Coleman, "Limited Inerrancy", p. 167).

a. Two overwhelming problems with this view are (see Payne, "Partial Omniscience" and Polythress, "Problems"):

   i. Who is to judge what is inerrant and what is errant? Once "full" inerrancy is modified, man alone (through scholarship) becomes the final judge of Scripture, rather than the other way around.

   ii. Defining what is meant by "limited" is difficult at best, as no authority can be claimed for the definition chosen except that of presupposition.

b. Many of those who choose an errant position have accepted two presuppositions (see Brown, "The Arian Connection", pp. 392-97):

   i. A prompt surrender of inerrancy is necessary

   ii. We can safely surrender inerrancy and still protect the gospel and the substance of the Christian faith.

c. Note three implications in a denial of inerrancy (Ibid., pp. 400-401):

   i. **Anthropological:** "If we assume that in order to be human, the Scripture must contain errors, we are inverting the proverb *errare humanum est* ('to err is human') and making it say *non errare inhumanum est* ('not to err is inhuman'). . . . This changes the problem of sin from a moral problem to an ontological one: man does not sin because he wills to, but because he is finite. This position ultimately removes guilt of sin from man, the creature, and attaches it to God, the Creator, who is viewed as making man in such a way that he had to sin. It also has implications for man's future state, for it implies that in order to be perfect he must become something other than human."

   ii. **Christological:** If we assert that man *qua* man must err, how do we handle the doctrine of Christ become fully man yet without sin?

   iii. **Ecclesiological and pneumatological:** To assert errors in the Bible is to break with almost 2,000 years of church history, and to assert that the church has been satisfied with a false important doctrine for that long. This would imply that the
Spirit, who was to "lead you into all truth" has not performed His job satisfactorily.

5. Two warnings for those who hold inerrancy (Brown, "The Arian Connection", pp. 391-2):
   a. Do not seek to make biblical inerrancy the central doctrine of Scripture. Scripture does not point to itself, but to Christ. "Even though it proclaims Him inerrantly, its first concern is that He be proclaimed, not that its own inerrancy be acknowledged." (Ibid., p. 391)
   b. Do not claim that Christians and the church have **always** recognized the importance of confessing inerrancy

21. Romans 3:1-4: What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? 2 Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God. 3 What is some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? 4 Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."

In the whole of the OT (Hodge, Romans, p. 69), the Jew has been entrusted with God's very words. Cranfield takes the position that "words of God" is very broad, including the salvation history events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 179), but this seems to read in a neo-orthodox meaning of revelation into Paul's words (note that in 2:17-29 Paul has been discussing that the Jews have the law).

22. Romans 7:12: So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.
   a. Not only is the law (commandment is used of the individual commandments in the law; Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 353) holy, it is also righteous and good.
   b. Holy: It reveals the holiness of God (Hodge, Romans, p. 226);
   c. Righteous: "they require just conduct among men, and also . . . , being merciful and not burdensome, they bear witness to God's own justice" (Cranfield, Romans, ICC, pp. 353-4).
   d. Good: they are intended for men's benefit.

23. Romans 10:4: Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.
   a. Christ is the "end" of the Law, which may be taken one (or two) of three ways:
      i. Fulfillment: in this view Christ is defined by reference to the law: He fulfills what the law initiates. Because the law is the reference point (rather than Christ), it is not to be preferred.
      ii. Goal; in this view, the law is defined by reference to Christ: He is the "goal, aim, intention, real meaning, and substance--apart from Him it cannot be properly understood at all" (Cranfield, A Shorter, p. 253).
iii. Termination, taken by recent commentators, but which does not seem to take into account all of Paul's positive quotes from the Law.

b. If Christ is the goal of the law, then righteousness (in terms of the Law) is available to all who believe in Christ.

24. Romans 15:4: For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

a. The Scriptures were written with a purpose in mind. They are for our benefit, it we care to take advantage of it (see also Romans 4:23-24, 1 Cor. 9:10; 10:11). This refers to all the OT, and not just selected parts (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 45).

b. Endurance may refer to
   (1) Endurance the Scriptures produce (Hodge, Romans, p. 433), or
   (2) Our own endurance (Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 735).

c. We might hope may refer to:
   i. (More likely) The Scriptures will prevent despondency and sustain us under our trials or
   ii. (Less likely) They are intended to secure the attainment of the great object of our hopes, the blessedness of heaven.

d. Cranfield sums up his understanding: "In justification of his appeal to Ps. 69.9 as an indication of the lengths to which for our sakes Christ was willing to go in not pleasing Himself but pleasing others and so a challenge to the strong among the Roman Christians to be considerate toward their weak brothers, Paul states that all the Scriptures (of the OT) were written for the instruction of Christians, in order that they might, with patient endurance and strengthened by the comfort and encouragement which the Scriptures give, hold fast the hope which is theirs in Christ." (Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 736)

25. Romans 16:25-26: Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him--

a. God commanded that the mystery of Christ, which had been hidden since the creation, to be revealed at last.

b. Paul's gospel was preached according to this revelation; it is the proclamation of Jesus Christ.

c. This mystery is fully only understood in light of its OT foreshadowing and attestation (Cranfield, Romans, ICC, p. 812).

26. Ephesians 2:20: built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus
himself as the chief cornerstone.

a. There are four major interpretations for "foundation" (see the extensive discussion on these options in Grudem, *The Gift in 1 Corinthians*, pp. 82-105):

i. It is primarily non-personal; it refers not to the apostles and prophets themselves (Barth, *Ephesians*, pp. 314-7), but to

   (1) Their preaching and teaching, or
   (2) Their activity of receiving and proclaiming the gospel, or
   (3) Their ruling and guiding activity in the NT church.

ii. It refers to the apostles and the OT prophets.

iii. It refers to the apostles and NT prophets (Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians*, p. 304; Robinson, *Ephesians*, pp. 67-69).

iv. It refers to the "apostles who are also prophets", the option preferred by Grudem. This does not mean that prophetic-apostles is a subset of apostle, but that apostles are also prophets. See the similar construction and idea in Eph. 4:11, where pastor-teacher is in mind.

b. The significance for us is the authority and role of the Apostles being the foundation (chronologically) of the church, which is seen both in their actions and in their writings. This is one reason for the NT canonical test of apostolic (whether direct or indirect) authorship.

**Bibliology after Acts**
(in rough chronological order)

27. 1 Timothy 5:18: For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

The second quote is Luke 10:7, which Paul cites as Scripture--he puts Luke in the same category as the OT (Grudem, *Scripture's Self-Attestation*, pp. 48-9; Harris, *Inspiration*, p. 228; contra Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 126)

28. 1 Peter 1:10: Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care,

a. Selwyn relates (Peter, p. 133): "We might say that the process indicated here is one of intense search for an object or truth known to be discoverable, . . ." 

b. Seeking to know about what the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating:

i. What circumstances (NIV, contra NASB, which has "person") the Spirit of Christ indicated in them (see Selwyn, Peter, pp. 134-5).

ii. What time the Spirit of Christ indicated in them.
iii. The Spirit of Christ was what gave them the witness about the sufferings and glories of Christ. He whet their appetites to discover more.

c. They sought to know them in the context of the Spirit of Christ predicting both the sufferings and the glories which followed the sufferings.

i. The sufferings of Christ (referred to 8 times in the epistle; Selwyn, Peter, p. 137) include His rejection by men and death at their hands (see Isa. 53)--they were a necessary precursor to His glories.

ii. The glories (or "triumphs"; Selwyn, Peter, p. 137) of Christ include His resurrection and placement at the right hand of God (see Isa. 11). In this context, Peter points out that another glory was the extension of God's offer of grace and mercy to the gentiles (Stibbs, Peter, p. 82).

d. They were not serving themselves, but you (see also Romans 15:4)

i. This was revealed to them (as an answer to their desire to know more fully the implications of their prophecies; see Stibbs, Peter, p. 82).

ii. What they predicted was announced to you through those who preached the gospel.

29. 1 Peter 1:23-25: For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, 25 but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

a. Fervently love (perfect tense: past action with present results) each other from the heart, which is to be done in obedience to truth (implies not just intellectual assent, but active submission; Stibbs, Peter, p. 93). The direction of purification: a sincere ("unfeigned", RSV) love of the brethren.

b. Do so because you have been born again (perfect tense again) of an imperishable seed, which is the word of God.

i. The word (these could grammatically refer to God, but the quote from Isaiah shows that Peter uses it of God's Word; see discussion in Selwyn, Peter, p. 151) is:

(1) Living (not just a set of "dead" propositions!)

(2) Abiding forever (the quote is from Isa. 40:6-8).

ii. This is the word which was preached to you.

30. 2 Timothy 3:15-16: and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

a. Timothy had been taught the Scriptures since infancy; the same obligation is on believing parents today.

b. The Scriptures are holy (see note on Rom. 1:1)
c. They are able to **make us wise towards salvation** (compare Ps. 19:7, "making wise the simple").

d. The Scriptures are not salvific in themselves--they point us to faith in Christ, which is where our salvation is found.

31. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

a. All Scripture: Paul does not exclude any part--even the genealogies or other lists, the history, the "scientific" statements, etc. found in the OT (see Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 44).

b. All Scripture is **God-breathed** (*theopneustos*)

i. Some translate this "All Scripture which is inspired", implying that some is inspired and some is not. This is not likely in view of a similar construction in 1 Tim. 4:4 and the context (Fee, 1 and 2 Timothy, p. 279; Kelly, Pastoral Epistles, p. 203).

ii. *Theopneustos* occurs only this time in the NT, and only 4 times in pre-Christian Greek literature (Kelly, Pastoral Epistles, p. 203). It literally means "God-breathed", and leaves no doubt as to the divine nature of the origin of Scripture. Young notes that it is passive in sense--it is not that the Scriptures are imbued with God's Spirit or that they inspire the readers, but that they were (passive) breathed out by God (Young, *Thy Word*, p. 20). For extended discussion, see Warfield, Inspiration and Authority, pp. 245-96.

iii. The sense is that it is the writings themselves that are inspired (see Young's discussion on the inappropriateness of this word; *Thy Word*, pp. 21-3; also Harris, Inspiration, pp. 19-20), not the human writers. "The word 'inspired,' however, is not to be understood as indicating something 'extra' superimposed on the writer or writing, to make the writing different from what it would otherwise be. It indicates rather how the writing came into being. It asserts that the writing is a product of the creative activity of the divine breath..." (Stibbs, "Witness of Scripture", p. 109).

iv. Grudem adds: "Since it is writings that are said to be 'breathed out,' this breathing must be understood as a metaphor for speaking. This verse thus states in brief form what has been evident in many other passages so far: the Old Testament writings are regarded as God's words in written form. God is the one who spoke (and still speaks) them, although using human agents to write them down." (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 39)

c. All Scripture is God-breathed, and is **useful**: because it is inspired of God, the Scriptures are not just empty platitudes, but references for life itself. They are not just mental
constructs divorced from life, but are useful in the very fabric of life.

d. All Scripture is God-breathed, and is useful for:

i. Teaching: it is the source of our doctrine, and the final authority from which we speak regarding the Christian faith.

ii. Rebuking: for refuting error and rebuking sin.

iii. Correcting: for convincing the misguided of their errors and setting them on the proper path again (emphasizes the behavioral/ethical side; Fee, 1 and 2 Timothy, p. 280).


e. When the Scripture is used in these ways, it fulfills the function of causing us to be complete and completely equipped.

Excursus: the Extent of Accommodation
(from Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", pp. 53-7)

There is no doubt that God accommodated Himself to man's limitations in inspiring the Scriptures. The fact that human language is used in them confirms this. An important question to ask, however, is how far did this accommodation go? A common view of the Bible among scholars today is expressed by Harold Fuller:

The God who lovingly willed to communicate revelational truth to men deliberately accommodated his language in nonrevelational matters to the way the original readers viewed the world about them, so as to enhance the communication of revelational truth, by which alone men could be saved." (Fuller, "Benjamin B. Warfield's View of Faith and History", Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society 11 (1968):81; cited by Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 53).

Did God "accommodate" Himself and His word to human fallibility when He inspired the authors of Scripture? The question boils down to this: Did God in Scripture ever make an incidental affirmation of a 'fact' that was untrue? The following six points show why this type of accommodation theory must be avoided:

1. It would be contrary to the unanimous witness of the OT and NT authors concerning the truthfulness of Scripture.

2. It would imply a denial of God's lordship over human language. If God is truly sovereign, He is sovereign not only over the language, but over the early training of the human authors, ensuring that they learned the language and were able to convey His thoughts accurately. In this sense, through God's sovereignty, the inspiration of the Scriptures came not at the time of their writing, but in the preparation of the authors throughout their lives.

3. It would imply that God had acted contrary to His character as a God who cannot tell a lie (see Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).
4. It would make Scripture an eternal witness to the lack of perfect truthfulness in God's speech.

5. It would create a serious moral problem for us. We are to be imitators of God's moral character, as we would be required to accommodate to false world views in order to more effectively communicate the Gospel. The Moonies do this—and call it "heavenly deception".

6. It would misuse a summary statement about the purpose of Scripture. The statement "Scripture makes us wise unto salvation" or "Scripture teaches us in matters of faith and practice" is correct, but it does not give the full purpose of Scripture (which also includes revealing the character of God to man).

6. 2 Peter 1:19-21: And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

a. Note the options: this could either be saying that the Scriptures confirmed the eyewitnesses or that the eyewitnesses confirm the Scriptures. Whichever we choose the final result is the same: the Scriptures are true. For the various understandings of what the "prophetic word" is, see Bauckham, Peter, Jude, p. 224. Here, we assume it to be the OT.

b. Because they are true, we are told to pay attention to them (rather than the clever myths of v. 16?).

c. The Scriptures are like a lamp shining in a dark (dingy and dusky, not absolutely dark) place. They will be that until the "day dawns." Is this a reference to Christ's second coming?

i. The morning star, which was Venus, was also used as a figure for royal or divine persons (see Rev. 2:28 and 22:16), and possibly for Messiah (Num. 24:17, "a star shall rise out of Jacob").

ii. But how does "in your hearts" fit? Four options:

(1) It can be connected with what follows, "until the morning star rises; knowing first of all in your hearts . . .", or

(2) It could refer to the anticipation of (or transformation due to) Christ's coming that we experience in our hearts as the day draws near.

(3) It could refer to the advent of Christ in the heart of the person; i.e., when he becomes a Christian.

(4) Finally, it could refer to the fact that the final revealing of Christ to believers will take place in our hearts. At that point in time, we will no longer need prophecy of the Scriptures, for "we shall know as we are known". We should pay attention to the Scriptures until that time comes (see Bauckham, Peter, Jude, p. 226).
d. Knowing this first of all (of primary importance you must know this): prophecy is not a matter of private interpretation (lit. "untying"). Four main options for understanding:

i. No prophecy is to be understood by private interpretation, but as the Church sees it (NASB).

ii. No prophecy is to be understood by private interpretation, but it must be interpreted in light of other Scriptures (or prophecies) rather than by the Church.

iii. No prophecy is exhausted by a single interpretation, it may find many fulfillments (see Mayor, Peter, Jude, pp. 111-4).

iv. No prophecy arises or originates from a prophet's own insight, it all comes from God (NIV, the best option; Harris, Inspiration, p. 64--see Bauckham, Peter, Jude, pp. 229-30 for illustrations of the idea from other contemporary literature which use the same grammatical construction).

(1) This fits the grammar better, as v. 20 is linked to v. 21, which clearly teaches this view.

(2) Taking the first option, the sense is that we can rely on the Scriptures because God is behind all that the human authors wrote.

(3) They spoke only as "moved" ("carried along,") by the Holy Spirit. Thus, this is a strong verse for the inspiration of the Scriptures. The metaphor is used of a ship carried by the wind (Acts 25:15, 17), and this idea is that, "The prophets raised their sails, so to speak (they were obedient and receptive), and the Holy spirit filled them and carried their craft along in the direction He wished," (Green, Peter, Jude, p. 91). Note that this has nothing to do with mechanical dictation--God used men and not machines (see Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 40). Young comments:

In being borne by the Spirit the writers were passive; in speaking and writing they were active. This might seem to be a contradiction, but it is not. It is simply an expression of the mystery involved in the truth that the words of Scripture are divine words and yet are also the words of human writers. (Young, Thy Word, p. 25, n. 2)

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**Excursus: Theories of Inspiration**

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| Intuition View| There is no divine element in the Bible; it is just a collection of the insights of religious geniuses. | 1. If so, then we have no hope for any absolute standard, and we cannot distinguish religious geniuses from religious morons!  
2. The Bible claims to be inspired--"good" men would not blatantly lie if God were not the source. |
| **Illumination** | Spirit-filled Christians wrote Scripture—when inspired, the writings result from a kind of divine illumination in which God granted deep religious insights to men; it could happen again today. | 1. Scripture claims more than just insights—it claims the very words are from God.  
2. 2 Timothy 3:16 indicates that it was the writings that are inspired, not the writers. |
| **Natural Inspiration** | The Bible was "inspired" as a poet or song writer is inspired. | 1. Contradicts biblical claims that God is the actual author of Scripture.  
2. Again, 2 Timothy 3:16 presents the writings as the inspired element. |
| **Partial Inspiration 1** | Only the statements concerning faith and salvation (i.e., religious truths) were inspired. | 1. Leaves us the judges of what is to be seen as "faith statements", with no absolute standards of reference.  
2. Weak view of God's sovereignty: how can you say God can infallibly inspire "faith" statements and yet He cannot infallibly inspire "historical" or "scientific" statements.  
3. Faith acts were always done in history—how can we expect to untangle historical elements from faith elements?  
4. Is God able to allow an historical inaccuracy, which in effect is a lie (Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2)? |
| **Partial Inspiration 2** | Only portions "requiring" supernational revelation are inspired (e.g., the accounts of creation, prophecy, etc.) | 1. Leaves us as the judges of what is to be seen as "requiring" revelation, with no absolute standards of reference.  
2. See the other objections under Partial Inspiration 1. |
| **Mystical Inspiration** | God can speak through Scripture at given moments, but it is not propositional revelation, only relational. | 1. Contradicts self-claims of Bible that God is the ultimate source of the truths.  
2. Is self-contradictory: cannot have relations without propositions and propositions needed to interpret relational activities. |
| **Plenary (full) Verbal Inspiration** | "Inspiration is God's superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in all the words of the original autographs." (Ryrie, A Survey, p. 38) | N.B. These objections are raised (see discussion in the Harris, Young, Warfield, etc.):  
1. There are "numerous contradictions" in the Bible, especially in parallel accounts of the same event.  
2. Man is involved in the writing, and his fallibility will inevitably intrude (e.g., there are numerous "grammatical mistakes" in the Bible.  
3. Plenary verbal inspiration requires a literal interpretative framework. |
7. 2 Peter 3:1-2: Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

   a. This is Peter's second letter. Was the first 1 Peter? Commentators are divided, with the majority in favour of it (see the options in Bauckham, Jude, 2 Peter, p. 285).

   b. He uses this letter to stir them up. They have sincere ("pure") minds--they had not yet been contaminated by the filth of the false teachers. He seeks to stir this aspect of them up to remember!

      i. "Pure" is a word used of holding a clay pot up to the sun to be sure that there were no cracks in it; it is literally "sun-judged."

      ii. The words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets (the OT).

      iii. The commandment of the Lord and Saviour of your apostles--how are apostles linked to the commandment spoken by Jesus? It seems best to treat it as "the commandment of the Lord and Saviour spoken by your apostles," (NASB).

         (1) "The commandment" probably refers to God's revelation through them (Harris, Inspiration, p. 227; contra Green, who takes it to refer to Peter's warnings here).

         (2) "Your apostles" may mean the ones who first brought them the message, or in contrast to the false teachers, which are not "your" people.

8. 2 Peter 3:16: He 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.

   a. What are "all of Paul's letters?" Does this mean that they have all been written and collated (see Kelly, Peter and Jude, p. 371)? Or simply all that Peter had read?

   b. Paul is "our beloved brother"--the disagreement mentioned in Galatians (2:14) has been cleared up. This is a strong verse for Petrine authorship, as a second century writer would have given Paul a more exalted title than "our beloved brother" (contra Bauckham, Jude, 2 Peter, p. 328).
c. Some things in Paul's writings were "hard to understand." (obscure, ambiguous). Thus they could be twisted by the false teachers ("unlearned and unstable"). Is he thinking of Paul's doctrine of justification (Rom. 6:1, 1 Cor. 6:12 and Gal. 5:13) or the requirements for Gentilic participation in Christ (over which they had disputed; Gal. 2:11-13) or something else?

d. Paul's writings are placed alongside other Scriptures as of equal authority (see Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation," p. 46; Young, Thy Word, pp. 46-7; Stonehouse, "Special Revelation", p. 85). "The inclusion of Paul's letters in this category certainly means they are regarded as inspired, authoritative writings . . . ranked alongside the OT and probably various other books, including other apostolic writings." (Bauckham, Jude, 2 Peter, p. 333)

Excursus: the Canon

1. Why do we consider the 66 books that comprise our Bible as the only ones to be called "Scripture"? On what basis were they included? These are questions concerning the "canonicity" of the Bible. Canon . . . is a Semitic loan word that originally has the meaning 'reed.' From this came the figurative sense of a 'measuring rod' or 'ruler' and from this the general idea of a 'norm' or 'standard'. Finally, the term could adopt the purely formal sense of a 'list' or 'table' . . . . The use of kanon to designate the Old or New Testament Scriptures originates in the latter half of the fourth century. (Dunbar, "The Biblical Canon", p. 300).

2. On what basis is canonicity determined?

a. Foundational presupposition: Canonicity is determined the Author of Scripture--God. Man's role is not to determine it, but to discover (or recognize) what God has already done.

b. Principles for discovering canonicity:

i. Examine the claims:

(1) Self-claims

(2) Supporting claims by other recognized books

(3) Supporting claims within the early church

ii. Examine the authorship:

(1) The OT Scriptures were written by confirmed prophets

(2) The NT Scriptures were written by or under the direction of confirmed apostles.

iii. Examine the content: does it agree with previous revelation?

iv. Examine the facticity: is it in agreement with the known facts of history?
3. The development of canonicity: some summary thoughts

a. The Old Testament sequence:

   i. Actual writing

   ii. Recognition by man ("argument from silence" evidence indicates that this was immediate; Dunbar notes that there is no historical evidence for the OT books 'acquiring' an authoritative status, "The Biblical Canon", p. 314)

   iii. Collection (which was done by 100 B.C. at the latest; Ibid., p. 315) and preservation by God's people.

b. The New Testament sequence:

   i. Actual writing

   ii. Recognition by man: In some cases this was almost immediate (e.g., Paul's citation of Luke and Peter's of Paul). We must bear in mind, however, that there was no "central clearing agency". Universal acceptance was not complete until the fourth or fifth century (N.B. Even as late as the Reformation, Luther appeared ready to question the canonicity of James!). This being the case, how can we be sure that the canon we have is what God intended? Four factors in the NT are crucial (Ibid., pp. 318-23):

      (1) The authority of the Old Testament: From its inception, Christianity was a religion whose existence and self-identity were structured (in part) by an OT canon, a collection of uniquely authoritative writings. A possible expansion on this literature would not have seemed totally inappropriate.

      (2) The authority of Jesus: The words of Jesus and the revelatory events of His life, death, and resurrection formed the very heart and center of the canon which was to develop.

      (3) The authority of the apostles: Jesus' authority as invested in the Apostles, and inseparable from them. They were the official channels of revelation appointed by Jesus himself (Mk. 3:14).

      (4) The rise of false teaching: The NT church was concerned with preserving the true teaching of Jesus and the Apostles and combatting the false teachings of others. The fact that there was a distinction between true and false, and that there were established criteria for such judgments, prepared the ground for decisions regarding canonicity of the NT.

   iii. Collection (may have begun very early, as the reference to "all of Paul's letters" by Peter shows) and preservation

4. Some modern approaches to canon history (Dunbar, "The Biblical Canon", pp. 345-55)

a. Historical critical (seen in James Barr): Scripture is understood in naturalistic terms as a purely human production; much more is this true of the canon.
Critique: Where the canon is seen to be purely and simply a consequence of the church's decision, with no divine or apostolic sanction, the results are disastrous. The Bible can only remain a fallible witness to a fallible church.

b. **Canon criticism** (seen in Brevor Childs): There is divine authority in Scripture, but it is human and time-conditioned. The history of the development of the canon is a thoroughly human one. The canon did not simply fall from heaven, and we cannot presuppose that the decisions of the early church were infallible. At the same time, he does not want to lose the authority of Scripture. He takes the neoorthodox position that through the human words of Scripture God can still speak His Word, though how this happens he does not explain.

Critique: This view lacks sufficient historical evidence--the early church fathers show no evidence that they were trying to 'establish' a canon.

c. **Conservative Catholicism** (seen in Nicolaus Appel): We dare not ignore the theological dimension in the history of the development of the canon: the Spirit worked infallibly through the church to confess the canon we now have (note that the Catholic church adds the Apocrypha to the Protestant canon).

Critique: Ecclesiastical infallibility has never been easy to prove or for Protestants to accept. Appel himself notes the "doubts", "struggles" and "uncertainty and hesitation" of the church's full acceptance of the canon, terms which hardly fit with the concept of church infallibility.

d. **Salvation history** (seen in Herman Ridderbos): The canon is only properly understood when seen in its connectedness with the redemptive action wrought in Jesus. The church, in recognizing a specific canon, was acting within the bounds of salvation history--it did not establish its own canon. The reception of the canon is not guaranteed to be infallible, but by faith (i.e., presuppositionally) we may acknowledge that the canon we have coincides with the canon of Christ.

Critique: Can we separate a "canon of Christ" from the empirical "canon of the church"? In setting such a strongly presuppositional framework, "faith" and "historical evidence" are too sharply divided.

5. How then should we view the canon? (Dunbar, "The Biblical Canon", p. 358)

a. The early church "regarded apostolicity as the qualifying factor for canonical recognition, however, this apostolicity should be understood not strictly in terms of authorship but in terms of content and chronology" (Ibid., p. 358).

b. The cannon should be seen as in principle closed. Canonicity, linked to apostolicity, is limited to foundational period of the church's existence. This need not be dated precisely, but is nonetheless still limited in scope.

c. Ridderbos' concept of salvation history is applicable: "the binding nature of the canon is based upon the conviction that the canon acknowledged by the church is nothing other than the redemptive-historical canon given by Jesus Christ through the apostles and those whom the church recognized as 'apostolic men."" (Ibid., p. 359)
d. Unless we are willing to accept the Catholic principle of ecclesiastical infallibility (and once we start, it will be difficult at best to stop!), there must remain open a theoretical possibility of an open canon. However, we may have a very high level of certainty, just as we do with major doctrines settled in early church history (such as the Trinity). The early church spoke with a widespread and unified voice on its certainty of the assessment that the current 27 NT books are those which should be included, and we may maintain that same certainty today.

9. Hebrews 1:1-2a: In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us his Son

a. There is a three-fold contrast between the previous and the present speaking of God (Osborne, "Hebrews," p. 1)

i. A contrast of method: previously it was in many ways, now in one way (through the Son). The previous ways include (Morris, Hebrews, p. 12):

   (1) Through a burning bush to Moses (Ex. 3:2ff)
   (2) In a still, small voice to Elijah (1 Kings 19:12ff)
   (3) In a vision in the temple to Isaiah (Is. 6:1ff)
   (4) In the showing of a basket of summer fruit to Amos (Amos 8:1)

ii. A contrast of time: previously it was in "many times", now it is in "these last days" (can be translated as "last age"). The previous communication came in fragments, this has come as a whole.

iii. A contrast of agent: previously it was in the prophets, now in a Son (the lack of definite article focuses on Christ's nature, and not His personality; Westcott, Hebrews, p. 7).

   (1) One Son is contrasted with many prophets.
   (2) He is a Son, and is unique in His relationship to God.
   (3) Note that God spoke in the prophets, not just through them.

b. Westcott summarizes (Hebrews, p. 4): "That which is communicated in parts, sections, fragments, must of necessity be imperfect; and so also a representation which is made in many modes cannot be other than provisional. The supreme element of unity is wanting in each case. But the Revelation in Christ, the Son, is both perfect in substance and form."

c. Note, however, that there is also continuity--God spoke then and has spoken now. That is the foundation for the epistle; and God's speaking now is culminated in Christ.

i. God has unified and drawn together what was previously fragmented and varied, and has done it through Jesus. This focus on the historical context fulfilled in the present circumstances plays an important role throughout the epistle.

ii. This shows that there are two stages in God's revelation of Himself. The first was in the prophets of the OT, and the last is in the Son, which is on par with the OT
prophecies (see Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 39).

10. Hebrews 4:12: The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow: it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.
   a. God's word is alive and active—as God's word, it must be so. It is sharper than any two-edged sword—it can cut through anything we devise, and has no blunt side.
   b. It pierces to the division of soul and spirit and joints and marrow—it separates materially and immaterially; it penetrates to the innermost being. This does not necessarily teach a separation of soul and spirit, as the thrust is on the fact that God's word cuts into our deepest parts and reveals our innermost secrets.
   c. It is able to judge the innermost parts of man. Nothing is hidden from the word of God, all is laid bare before Him. Thus, we are powerless, guilty, and fully exposed before God. We must have His grace if we are to enter His rest. On the difficulty of translating "laid bare", see Morris, Hebrews, p. 45.

11. Hebrews 10:28: Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

The one who rejected Moses' message faced God's rejection. How much more those who reject Christ's message, which is embodied in the NT!

12. Revelation 1:1-3: The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2 who testifies to everything he saw—that is the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. 3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

   a. The revelation (lit. "apocalypse") of Jesus Christ (1a).
      i. "Apocalypse" was not used as an identification of literary style (as taught by many modern scholars), but an indicator of the nature and purpose of Revelation (Mounce, Revelation, p. 64).
         (1) The word means "an uncovering of something hidden", (Morris, Revelation, p. 45).
         (2) Here it specifically refers to the disclosure of "what must shortly take place" (Ladd, Revelation, p. 20).
      ii. "Of" Jesus Christ—Christ mediated this revelation to John.
         (1) "Of" could mean about, by, or belonging to. All three are possible, though the emphasis might be on the last one.
         (2) The full term "Jesus Christ" is found three times in vv. 1-5, but nowhere else in the rest of the book (which uses "Jesus").
   b. God gave it to Jesus to show to John, who writes to us. God is the source of all
revelation (1b; Dan. 2:28, 29, 45).

i. The reason God gave the revelation: to show the things which must shortly take place to Christ's bond-servants.

ii. "Shortly" has three possible understandings:

1. Suddenly (once they start, they will progress rapidly).
2. Certainly (there is no doubt that they will occur).
3. Without delay, which, in light of "the time is near" in v. 3, seems best. Does this mean:
   a. That these events occurred in John's lifetime (the preterist view)?
   b. Or is it a telescoping of time giving no preference for the preterist interpretation (the view that I hold; such a foreshortening often happens in biblical prophecy--see, for example, Mark 13:30).

iii. It was sent and communicated to John by an angel (1c-2).

i. Who is the subject to "sent and communicated"? Two options exist:

1. God, in which case "an angel" would have the general meaning of "a messenger" and refer to Christ.
2. Christ, in which case "an angel" refers to the angel mentioned in the book (22:8). This fits better. Note that angels are referred to some 67 times in the book (Johnson, "Revelation", p. 417).

ii. "Communicated" means to make known by some type of sign, which indicates the symbolic character of the book. The symbols are not meant to be seen as physical pictures (the dragon, etc.), but as a literary method used to convey the intended message in a form that combines mystery and realism.

iii. It was communicated to John the Apostle.

1. He is a bond-servant of Christ (God's people are so mentioned 11 times in the epistle; Johnson, "Revelation", p. 417).
2. He bore witness to all that he saw:
   a. To the word of God (the revelation which comprises all the things that John saw).
   b. To the testimony of Jesus (not testimony about Jesus, but testimony by Jesus, who testified to the revelation).
   c. "All that he saw" limits the meaning of the other two, and should not be seen as a third thing to which John bears witness.
(i) If we see vv. 1-3 as a prologue written by John after the rest of the book, this refers to Revelation itself.

(ii) The other option is to see it as an indication of another vision, which is lost.

d. Blessed is he who (3):

i. Reads the prophecy aloud to the rest of the church. John regards this as prophecy, not just a sermon or philosophical treatise.

ii. Hears and heeds the prophecy. Hearing is not enough; we must obey what this revelation says (see also Luke 11:28).

(1) Revelation is not mere prediction; it contains moral imperatives that are to be obeyed.

(2) This shows that the word "prophecy" is not exclusively "telling the future". Here it means "forth-telling God's word".

iii. This is the first of seven beatitudes in the book; see also 14:13, 16:15, 19:19, 20:6, 22:7, and 14)

e. The time is at hand: the decisive moment is here! Christ can return at any time, so listen and obey God's word.

f. Johnson relates ("Revelation", p. 418): "A comparison of the Prologue (1:1-3) with the Epilogue (22:7-11) shows that John has followed throughout Revelation a deliberate literary pattern. This should alert us to the possibility that the entire book was designed to be heard as a single unit in the public worship service."

13. Revelation 19:10: At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

What does the angel mean by "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"? Options include:

a. The testimony about Jesus is the common substance of all prophecy, or

b. The true spirit of prophecy shows itself by testifying to Jesus, or

c. The message given by Jesus is the heart of all prophecy (Mounce, Revelation, p. 342), or

d. The testimony borne by Jesus is the burden (concern) of the Spirit who inspires prophecy (Beasley-Murray, Revelation, p. 276).

14. Revelation 22:6-7: The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place." 7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."
a. The angel tells John that the words are faithful and true.

b. John relates that God sent an angel to show these things to his bond-servants. They will shortly come to pass (see 1:1).

c. Jesus is coming quickly--blessed is the one who heeds the prophecy of this book (the sixth blessing, see 1:3).

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Excursus: the Trustworthiness of the Bible
(from Evidence That Demands a Verdict, pp. 17-79)

1. The Bible is unique in its:

   a. Continuity. It is a book that was written over a span of 1600 years (over 60 generations) by more than 40 authors from every walk of life on three different continents in three different languages on hundreds of controversial topics with harmony and continuity. For all of the differences of authorship, style, time, and location, "the Bible is not simply an anthology; there is a unity which binds the whole together. An anthology is compiled by an anthologist, but no anthologist compiled the Bible" (F. F. Bruce, The Books and the Parchments, 88).

   b. Circulation. McDowell points out: "The Bible has been read by more people and published in more languages than any other book. . . . overall, there is absolutely no book that reaches or even begins to compare to the circulation of the Scriptures" (p. 21).

   c. Survival.

      i. Survival through time. In terms of manuscript evidence, we have greater sources for correction of our text of the Bible than any ten pieces of classical literature combined. One scholar has pointed out that we have better resources for knowing the exact text of the written manuscripts of the Bible than we do for Shakespeare's plays (written less than 250 years ago)!

      ii. Survival through persecution. No other book has been banned in such widespread fashion (from Roman emperors to communist governments) and yet has not only survived, but has the greatest circulation of any book in history.

      iii. Survival through criticism. Bernard Ramm states: "A thousand times over, the death knell of the Bible has been sounded, the funeral procession formed, the inscription cut on the tombstone, and committal read."

      "But somehow, the corpse never stays put. No other book has been so chopped, knifed, sifted, scrutinized, and vilified. What book on philosophy or religion or psychology or belles lettres of classical or modern times has been subject to such a mass attack as the Bible? with such venom and skepticism? with such thoroughness and erudition? upon every chapter, line and tenet?"

      The Bible is still loved by millions, read by millions, and studied by millions."
(Protestant Christian Ethics, 232-33).

d. Teachings.

i. Prophecy. Wilbur Smith points out, "It is the only volume ever produced by man, or a group of men in whom is to be found a large body of prophecies relating to individual nations, to Israel, to all the peoples of the earth, to certain cities, and to the coming of One who was to be the Messiah. The ancient world had many different devices for determining the future, known as divination, but not in the entire gamut of Greek and Latin literature, even though they use the words of prophet and prophecy, can we find any real specific prophecy of a great historic event to come in the distant future, nor any prophecy of a Saviour to arise in the human race" (The Incomparable Book, 9-10).

ii. History. Nelson Glueck, a well-known and well-respected archaeologist, has stated, "All I have ever said is that in all of my archaeological investigation I have never found one artifact of antiquity that contradicts any statement of the Word of God" (quoted by Earl Radmacher in an interview with McDowell).

2. The Bible presents a reliable account of the events on which it speaks—it is worthy of our trust.

a. Reliable in regard to historical text.

i. The bibliographical test (and examination of the reliability of the current texts as they pertain to the originals; e.g., is what we call the Bible today the same "Bible" that was originally written?).

(1) Testimony of scholars who certify that what we have is what was written include:

(a) Ezra Abbot (Critical Essays, 4) points out that of the 150,000 textual variations, only about 7,500 have enough textual evidence to justify considering them as possibilities of the original text. Of these 7,500, only about 400 involve an actual difference in meaning. Of the 400, only a "few exceptional cases among them may relatively be called important."

(b) Fenton John Anthony Hort, whose work is commonly accepted as the standard, relates that we have at least seven-eights of the original text. Of the remaining one-eighth in question, he continues: "... This area may be very greatly reduced. ... Setting aside differences of orthography, the words in our opinion still subject to doubt only make up about one-sixteenth of the whole New Testament. In this second estimate the proportion of comparatively trivial variations is beyond measure larger than in the former; so that the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation is but a small fraction of the whole residuary variation, and can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text" (The New Testament in the Original Greek, p. 2).

(c) Frederic Kenyon stated: "One word of warning, ... must be
emphasized in conclusion. No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading. . . . It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain: especially is this the case with the New Testament. The number of manuscripts of the New Testament, of early translations from it, and of quotations from it in the oldest writers of the Church, is so large that it is practically certain that the true reading of every doubtful passage is preserved in some one or other of these ancient authorities. This can be said of no other ancient book in the world" (Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts, p. 23).

(2) The manuscript evidence: all in all, we have some 14,000 manuscripts of the NT itself. Add to this some 36,000 quotations of various parts of the NT by early church fathers before the year 350 A.D., and the attestation of the accuracy of our NT documents can be seen to be in a class by itself when compared to ANY other document of antiquity. (See the charts in Evidence, pp. 48, 55.)

ii. The internal reliability test (does the Bible contradict itself?). Concerning this area, Robert Horn states, ". . . difficulties do not constitute objections. Unsolved problems are not of necessity errors. This is not to minimize the area of difficulty; it is to see it in perspective. Difficulties are to be grappled with and problems are to drive us to seek clearer light; but until such time as we have total and final light on any issue we are in no position to affirm, 'Here is a proven error, an unquestionable objection to an infallible Bible.' It is common knowledge that countless 'objections' have been fully resolved since this century began" (The Book that Speaks for Itself, 86-87).

iii. The external reliability test (does the Bible contradict any other known historical materials?).

Extra-biblical sources from the earliest centuries confirm the truth of the Bible. The list of early authors who confirm the reliability of the Bible as accurate history includes Eusebius, Papias, Irenaeus, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, and even Flavius Josephus (a Jewish historian). For numerous quotes of early writers who attest to the truth of the NT manuscripts, see McDowell, pp. 66-68.

b. Reliable in regard to archaeological evidence.

i. Along with Nelson Glueck (quoted above), William F. Albright has written, "There can be no doubt that archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of Old Testament tradition" (Archaeology and the Religions of Israel, 176).

ii. Why do many scholars continue to deny the archaeological accuracy of the Bible? Millar Burrows (of Yale) states: "The excessive skepticism of many liberal theologians stems not from a careful evaluation of the available data, but from an enormous predisposition against the supernatural" (quoted by Howard Vos in Can I Trust My Bible?, 176). Note the many examples of how the Bible has been thought incorrect but later proven correct by archaeology (as given by McDowell in pp. 71-50.)
15. Revelation 22:9: But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

16. Revelation 22:18: I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

   a. John gives a severe warning against willful distortion of Revelation:

      i. If anyone adds to the words of this prophecy, God will add the plagues of the book to him.

      ii. If anyone takes away from the words of this book, God will remove his part from the tree of life and the holy city.

      iii. In the days before the printing press this would be a problem, since copyists could add or delete as they chose without anyone being the wiser. Warnings like this were common in apocalyptic literature.

   b. Even though John almost certainly did not consciously write this warning as a conclusion for the whole NT, as Grudem notes:

      For one who believes that God oversaw the compilation of the New Testament, the fact that these verses occur at the end of this particular book cannot be seen as a mere coincidence. Revelation is the book that primarily describes for us the distant future and it most naturally belongs at the end of the canon, just as Genesis, which describes the distant past, belongs at the beginning. Therefore, it may not be inappropriate to think of Revelation 22:18-19 as having a secondary application to the whole of the Bible that precedes it. Understood in this way, these verses both close the canon and simultaneously warn all future generations that all the words that go before are God's very words, and to add to them or take from them is to invite eternal death. (Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", p. 49)

**Excursus: Formulating a Doctrine of Scripture**
(Grudem, "Scripture's Self-Attestation", pp. 57-59)

From the NT evidence, there are several themes which must be considered in formulating a doctrine of the nature and character of Scripture:

1. What has traditionally been called 'verbal inspiration'--namely, the view that all the words of Scripture are spoken by God--is clearly taught by many passages in both the Old and New Testaments.

2. The method of revelation from God to the authors of Scripture is seldom discussed in the Bible. The emphasis is not on the process, but on the result.

3. The biblical authors clearly teach that Scripture is infallible--if that word is taken to mean
that Scripture will never lead us astray in what we are to believe or obey.

4. Any attempt to find the Bible some encouragement to restrict the areas in which Scripture is reliable and truthful will surely fail, for the implication of literally hundreds of verses is that God's word is reliable in every way:
   a. It is free from impurities (Ps. 12:6)
   b. It is eternal and unchanging in heaven (Ps. 119:89)
   c. It has unique and unlimited perfection (Ps. 119:96)
   d. It proves true in every word (Prov. 30:5)
   e. It is not only true in each part, but it is also 'truth' when the parts are added together (Ps. 119:160)
   f. It is not limited to the truthfulness of man, but is a truthful as God Himself (Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29).
   g. Any historical detail in the Old Testament narrative can be cited with a confidence that it both 'happened' and 'was written down for our instruction' (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11), because every word of Scripture has been spoken by God who never lies (Titus 1:2) and for whom lying is impossible (Heb. 6:18).
   h. God's word is not only 'true'; it is 'truth' (John 17:17).

5. Once we have understood what these texts say about the Bible's truthfulness, it is necessary to move from the academic exercise of examining scriptural texts to the personal question each person must ask himself: Will I believe this? Will I believe that the words of Scripture are the words of my Creator, the words of One who cannot lie, and that they are even now speaking to me?

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**Bibliology in the African Context**

1. Two selected historical notes (from Abogunrin, "Biblical Research", pp. 7-9)
   a. Africa may be called the second home of the Bible, and the home of the first major translation project, as the LXX was translated in Alexandria (Egypt) in the third century B.C.
   b. During the second century A.D., three of the most important centers of biblical study were located in Africa (Alexandria, Carthage, and Hippo). These three centers played a dominant role in the determination of the biblical canon.

2. The impact of Bible translation in Africa:
   a. Mbiti writes:
      
      But then comes the translation of the Bible, either in full or in part, and with it the doors swing open. People now feel that they are automatically initiated into the mysteries of the biblical truth, the mysteries of the Christian way. They now have full access to the Word of God. Now God speaks their language—and the Bible is now their Bible. They are at last freed to take it seriously and to apply it in ways they understand. In this way, the Bible in the local language becomes the most directly influential single factor in shaping the life of the church in Africa.

   b. Barrett notes the connection between Bible translation and independency:
It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the Bible in African society. The portions of it that are first translated are in most cases the first printed material in the vernacular language. Vast literacy campaigns are based on it. Ability to read a gospel is a requirement for baptism in many Protestant churches. Africans have evinced the same readiness as people elsewhere to place unique value and trust in statements that are printed in books. Further, the psychological importance of a tribe possessing the Bible in its own language, called by its own name . . . is incalculable. Several successions . . . have begun because of mission decisions not to publish versions in those languages . . .

Up to this point the missions had had the same absolute control over the scriptures as they had exercised over the Church. They alone had access to the Hebrew and Greek sources; their interpretation was final. But with the publication of African translations, a momentous change took place: it now became possible to differentiate between missions and scriptures. Through these scriptures God, Africans perceived, was addressing them in the vernacular in which was enshrined the soul of their people; but a large proportion of the missionary force still had not learned the vernacular, and addressed them in foreign tongues. The vernacular scriptures therefore provided an independent standard of reference that African Christians were quick to seize on. (Barrett, *Schism and Renewal*, p. 127)

He further adds:

All these facts indicate that the decision to translate the scriptures into a vernacular, or not to do so, can have momentous effects in the tribes concerned . . . The Vernacular translation enables the ethnic group concerned to grasp the inner meanings of such profound and intricate biblical doctrines as the liberty of the Christian man, . . . and do so in a way in which no previous translations in linguae francae have been able to do. Further, it is clear that these vernacular translations--with all the attendant expenditure of effort on orthography, grammars, dictionaries, and studies of tribal cultures--have contributed markedly to the recovery by Africans of the cultural identity of their tribe, later expressed in such bodies as tribal political parties, welfare societies, and particularly in tribal independent churches. (Ibid., p. 133)

He concludes:

Subsequently, the independent churches' break with the mission churches has thrown them back even further onto the Bible in their search for legitimation and continuity with historic Christianity. In the course of this, many of the missions' dogmas and practices have become reformulated and moulded in a more biblical pattern. From this point of view, therefore, the entire movement of independency across Africa takes on the aspect of a drive to recover a more biblically-based religion vindicating the traditional place in society of the African family. (Ibid., p. 134)

c. Finally, in this regard, Lamin Sanneh notes:

The question with which we are faced fundamentally is this: Of the two processes at work in Christianity, historical transmission and indigenous assimilation, which one is the more significant? Without hesitation we should say the process of assimilation, for it is within that that the historical process itself becomes meaningful. Let me clarify that point. Missionaries were often exercised about the question of scriptural translation, and made that their primary object. Whatever missionary theology was
and however distant from the culture, the matter of having the Bible available in local languages was accorded priority. Often, it is true, the work of translation acquired steam from the promise of statistical reward, but that was to crown the albor, not to be its substitute. This enterprise of translation proceeded on two revolutionary notions concerning the significance of local cultures.

i. One was that local languages, whatever their social status, could serve as adequate bearers of the divine revelation: to put the matter coarsely, God was not so disdainful of Africans as to be incommunicable in their language. The import of this was to imbue local cultures with an eternal significance and to endow African languages with a transcendent range. The spirits of the ancestors, fitted with the engine of biblical revelation, transformed local neighborhoods into commuter belts of heaven. You may object that that was not the intention of Bible translators, but you can hardly deny that it was a universal consequence of their efforts.

ii. The second was the assumption that the God whom the missionary came to serve had actually preceded him or her in the field and that to discover His true identity the missionary would have to delve deep into the local culture. It is the hidden reality of this divine presence that both validates external mission and requires translation as a sine qua non of witness. Thus the central categories of Christian theology—God, creation, Jesus Christ, and history ('the world')—are transposed into their local equivalents, suggesting that Christianity had been adequately anticipated. To digress for a moment, perhaps this realization caused some missionaries to try to put the brakes on local religious vocation to which Christianity was being effectively yoked. But no matter. Scriptural translation had invoked the beast of the tribe and there was no stopping it.

d. To relate this to the two-part model proposed above, the process of historical transmission in the form it took under scriptural translation stimulated that of indigenous assimilation. Before long the forces of adaptation predominated over those of transmission. The missionary acquired a transformed significance, becoming important, not as an ally of the colonial regime, but as the unwitting agent of local adaptation over which the African presided with effective authority. If they said they came to serve, missionaries were now finding that in reality they could do nothing more.

e. Whatever their degree of competence, missionaries remained outside the local culture. The language into which they translated the Scriptures remained the mother tongue of Africans. In the Christian setting of Scripture and liturgy this language resonated with familiar religious notions to which the missionary would be oblivious. (Sanneh, "The Horizontal and Vertical in Mission", p. 166)

3. The battle over inerrancy in the West and its relevancy to Africa

a. Is it a true biblical question?

The biblical data are unequivocal: the Bible is God's very word, not just subjectively but objectively. It does not merely witness to revelation—it is revelation. The question is indeed very biblical!
b. How relevant is it in the African context, when there is no cultural equivalent to the concept of "plenary verbal inspiration" or "inerrancy"?

The answer to this goes back to any question of biblical truth which may be perceived as irrelevant in a particular context. Because we perceive of truth as corresponding to reality, and because we perceive of it as propositional (and not limited to relations), whatever the Bible portrays as truth is relevant because all mankind is created in God's image and under His sovereignty.

Thus, while there may not be a perceived relevance among the average Christians, the complete veracity of God's word is a truth portrayed in Scripture that must not be ignored in our teachings. This issue will become more "relevant" on the continent if those teaching in the University contexts of liberal persuasion gain ground in influencing the average Christian in the pew, which has not yet significantly happened. The need now is more for preventative medicine than hospitalization.

c. On what fronts should the battle be waged, if at all, in this context? The two warnings given by Brown are relevant (Brown, "The Arian Connection", pp. 391-2):
   
i. Do not seek to make biblical inerrancy the central doctrine of Scripture. Scripture does not point to itself, but to Christ. "Even though it proclaims Him inerrantly, its first concern is that He be proclaimed, not that its own inerrancy be acknowledged." (Ibid., p. 391)
   
ii. Do not claim that Christians and the church have always recognized the importance of confessing inerrancy

4. The African and the Old Testament

a. Many Africans state an inherent empathy for the Old Testament, the Hebrew mindset and ties to the land being more relevant than the more philosophical approach of the NT (see, for example, Dinwiddy, "Biblical Usage", p. 30).

b. Many have proposed an OT emphasis in the preaching of the African Initiated Churches. Mbiti cites Harold W. Turner's study of the use of the Bible in the preaching of the Aladura Church, and notes that generally the whole bible is cited. The Aladura Church tends to use the NT four times more than the OT. During the same period, an Anglican congregation in Ibadan used the NT seven times more. Thus, comparatively speaking, the Aladura used the OT just less than twice as much as the Anglican church. However, that the whole Bible is used cannot be questioned (Mbiti, Bible and Theology, pp. 35-40).

5. Other questions for a bibliology in Africa

a. Of what value to African Christianity is the current approach of the various schools of higher criticism (Abogunrin, "Biblical Research", p. 13)?

b. How can God use African theologians to free biblical scholarship from Western domination and Western world-views?

c. How can African scholars uniquely interact with and explain the biblical concept of
revelation in light of their contexts?

d. Of what importance is a solid biblical foundation in the development of an African theology which speaks to the needs seen today in Africa?

e. Is the Bible just another source, an important source, the primary source, or the only authoritative source for theologizing in the African context?

f. How are we to effectively deal with the abuse of the Bible that takes place in many African settings, especially the more syncretistic of the African initiated churches?