

**“Bible Doctrine”: Wayne Grudem**  
**Chapter 2: The Authority and Inerrancy of the Bible**  
**Notes: Pastor Keith McMinn**

**I. Explanation and Scriptural Basis**

“The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.” (Grudem, p. 21)

**Chapter Review Question**

1. What does Grudem state as the four characteristics of Scripture?

- Authority of Scripture
- Clarity of Scripture
- Necessity of Scripture
- The Sufficiency

2. Define the authority of Scripture:

- “The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.” (Grudem, p. 21)

**A. The Bible claims that all its words are God’s words.**

**1. This is what the Bible claims for itself.**

- “Thus says the Lord” appears hundreds of times.
- Therefore to disbelieve or disobey anything a prophet says is to disbelieve or disobey God Himself.
  - *And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. (Deut. 18:19)*
  - *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16)*

**2. We are convinced of the Bible’s claim to be God’s words as we read the Bible.**

- “Our ultimate conviction that the words of the Bible are God’s words comes only when the Holy Spirit speaks in and through the words of the Bible to our hearts and gives us an inner assurance that these are the words of our Creator speaking to us. Apart from the work of the Spirit of God, a person will not receive or accept the truth that the words of Scripture are in fact the words of God.” (Grudem, p. 25)
- *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:27)*

**3. Other evidence is useful but not finally convincing.**

- Historically Accurate
- Internally Consistent
- Contains prophecies that have been fulfilled
- Influenced the course of human history

- Continued changing the lives of millions of individuals.

**4. The words of Scripture are self-attesting.**

- The ultimate authority by which Scripture is shown to be God's words must be Scripture itself. (Grudem, p. 26)

**5. Objection: This is a circular argument.**

- The Bible claims to be God's Word.
- All arguments for an absolute authority must ultimately appeal to that authority for proof.

**6. The divine authorship of the Bible does not imply dictation from God as sole means of communication.**

- *In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.* (Hebrews 1:1)

**Chapter Review Question**

3. What does the Bible claim when it uses phrases like "Thus says the Lord?"

- That they are God's own words

4. Describe the relationship between God and the prophets in the Bible.

- To disbelieve or disobey anything a prophet says is to disbelieve or disobey God.

5. Breathing in 2 Timothy 3:16 is a metaphor: surviving, **speaking**, swimming, stirring

6. **True/False:** One can say "God said" of the words in the Old Testament.

**B. Therefore, to Disbelieve or Disobey Any Word of Scripture Is to Disbelieve or Disobey God.**

*He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"* (Luke 24:25)

**C. The Truthfulness of Scripture**

**1. God cannot lie or speak falsely.**

- The essence of the authority of Scripture is its ability to compel us to believe and to obey it and to make such belief and obedience equivalent to believing and obeying God Himself. (Grudem, p. 30)
- *in the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,* (Titus 1:2)
- *God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged.* (Hebrews 6:18)

**2. Therefore, all the words in Scripture are completely true and without error in any part.**

- Since the words of the Bible are God's words, and since God cannot lie or speak falsely, is it correct to conclude that there is no truthfulness or error in any part of the words of Scripture. (Grudem, p. 30)

- *God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. (Psalm 12:6)*

**3. God's words are the ultimate standard of truth.**

- *Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)*

**4. Might some new fact ever contradict the Bible?**

- *God, the author of scripture, knows all true facts (past, present, and future.) No fact will ever turn up that God did not know ages ago and take into account when he caused Scripture to be written. (Grudem, p. 31)*
- Ever true fact is something that God has known already from eternity and is something that therefore cannot contradict God's speech in Scripture. (Grudem, p. 31)

**Chapter Review Question**

7. Why is the Bible more persuasive than other religious books?
8. The process of persuasion is best likened to what shape according to Grudem?  
(Circle, triangle, **spiral**, cone)
  - P. 27
9. Fill in the blanks: To disbelieve or **disobey** \_\_\_\_\_ any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or **disobey** \_\_\_\_\_ God.
10. What is the difference between saying God's words are true and that God's Word is Truth?
  - It is truth itself

**D. The Inerrancy of Scripture**

**1. The meaning of inerrancy.**

- The inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything which is contrary. (Grudem, p. 32)
- This definition does not mean that the Bible tells us every fact there is to know about any one subject, but it affirms that what it does say about any subject is true. (Grudem, p. 32)

**a. The Bible can be inerrant and still speak in the ordinary language of everyday speech.**

- It should not include us, then, to affirm both that the Bible is absolutely truthful in everything it says and that it uses ordinary language to describe natural phenomena or to give approximations or rough numbers when those are appropriate in the context. (Grudem, p. 33)

**b. The Bible can be inerrant and still include loose or free quotations.**

- An accurate citation of another person needed to include only a correct representation of the content of what the person said (rather like our use of indirect quotations); it was not expected to cite each word exactly. (Grudem, p. 33)

- c. **It is consistent with inerrancy to have unusual or uncommon grammatical constructions in the Bible.**

**2. Some current challenges to inerrancy.**

- a. **The Bible is only authoritative for “faith and practice.”**
- b. **The term inerrancy is a poor term.**
- c. **We have no inerrant manuscripts therefore, talk about an inerrant Bible is misleading.**
- d. **The biblical writers “accommodated” their messages in minor details to the false ideas current in their day and affirmed or taught those ideas in an incidental way.**
- e. **There are some clear errors in the Bible.**
  - i. **The order of Jesus’ temptations**
  - ii. **The order of Theudas and Judas**
  - iii. **Take sandals and a staff or don’t take sandals or a staff?**

**3. Problems with denying inerrancy.**

- a. **If we deny inerrancy, a serious moral problem confronts us: May we imitate God and intentionally lie in small matters also.**
- b. **Second, if inerrancy is denied, we begin to wonder if we can really trust God in anything he says.**
- c. **Third, if we deny inerrancy, we essentially make our own human minds a higher standard of truth than God’s Word itself.**
- d. **Fourth, if we deny inerrancy, we must also say that the Bible is wrong not only in minor details but in some of its doctrines as well.**

**E. Written Scripture Is Our Final Authority**

- It is important to realize that the final form in which Scripture is authoritative is in its written form.

**F. Liberal Protestant Theology Understands the Bible to be Merely Human Words, Not God’s Words.**

- Look at the chart on the screen

**Chapter Review Question**

11. Define inerrancy.

- The inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything which is contrary. (Grudem, p. 32)

12. What does 2 Timothy 3:16 teach us about God’s Word? Write our factual statements that we can discern from this verse.

13. Grudem mentions several different means of communication from God to the biblical authors from Luke 1:1-3; John 14:26; Hebrews 1:1; and Revelation 2:1, 8, 12. What do each of these communicate about how God interacts with his people?

14. Do you engage with Scripture like it is the very Word of God? Ask God to help you to grow in your trust that reading Scripture is reading His Word. How does confidence in the inerrancy of the Bible help you engage the text of the Bible devotionally?

**Memory Verse**

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16)*