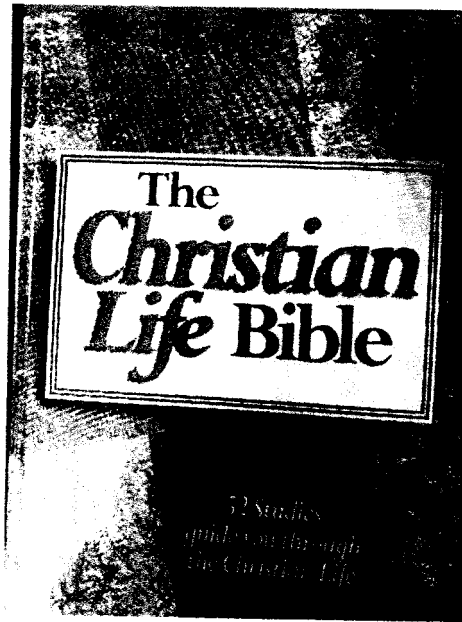


THE CHRISTIAN LIFE BIBLE



52 Studies guide you through the Christian Life

MASTER OUTLINE NUMBER ONE

Inerrancy of the Scriptures

For centuries the vast majority of people in the Christian world accepted the Scriptures as The *Holy Bible*, and believed it to be God's revealed written message to mankind. They believed that it was free of mistakes (inerrant), that it could not be wrong on any subject (infallible), and that its words came from God Himself through specially chosen prophets (inspired). Jewish believers had held this same opinion for centuries before, with respect to the Old Testament, and the orthodox Jews still hold this view today. The belief that the Bible was God's written Word and free from error was seen to be the Bible's own claim for itself (2 Tim. 3:16), as well as the authoritative claim of Christ Himself (John. 10:35).

Thus, orthodox Christians today, whatever their denominational label, still hold the doctrine that the Holy Scriptures (both Old and New Testaments) are God's actual words to man (originated by Him and communicated by His Holy Spirit's guidance through chosen, holy messengers-2 Pet. 1:20, 21), and are thus verbally (the written words, not merely the thoughts) inerrant, infallible, and inspired, as they were originally written in the autographs-that is, in the actual documents penned by the prophets and apostles, or by their secretaries when dictated (Rom. 16:22).

In contrast to the orthodox position, men have periodically risen who have attacked biblical accuracy. In unbelief they have rejected the Creation account, miracles, the deity of Jesus, and many other great and eternal truths, expounding theories which attack the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures.

During the past two centuries there has been an increase of negative criticism of the Bible in schools of learning, and it has filtered down to our public education system.

In light of this, we invite the reader to consider carefully the following reasons-drawn from the Bible itself-for believing in the inerrancy of the Scriptures.

1-A. The Bible Declares Itself to Be the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16)

1-B. Christ Taught the Inerrancy of the Bible (John 10:35)

1-C. The Prophets of the Old Testament Received the Scriptures as Inerrant (2 Chronicles 36:20, 21)

1-D. Christ and the Apostles Authenticated the New Testament as Inerrant (2 Peter 1:21)

1-E. Christ and the Apostles Accepted Genesis as a Factual Account (Matthew 19:4)

1-F. Christ and the Apostles Accepted the Books Most Attacked by Critics (Matthew 12:40, 41)

1-G. Fulfilled Prophecy Shows the Inerrancy of the Bible (Psalm 119:89)

1-A. The Bible Declares Itself to Be the Word of God

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. [2 Pet. 1:20] • Rom. 15:4 • training, discipline

I-A. The Bible Declares Itself to Be the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16) -"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (v. 16). This great declaration explains and affirms why the Bible alone has been the final authority for the faith and practice of evangelical Christianity through the centuries. Note that:

(1) "All Scripture" refers to the entire Bible (Old and New Testaments). from the Creation account in Genesis to the new heaven and new earth in the book of Revelation.

(2) "All Scripture" refers to the written Word. The doctrine of biblical inerrancy asserts that God's Holy Spirit so guided "holy men of God" (2 Pet. I:21) so that the words they wrote, and which have been preserved as our Bible, were kept free from error, in fact or doctrine. It is not affirmed that Luke never erred as a person; rather, that when he penned his Gospel and the book of Acts, God's Spirit, by a special act of supernatural superintendance, so guided these particular writings that they

(a) said what God wished to be said;

(b) were written error-free in the autographs (original copies).

(3) "All Scripture" refers to the thirty-nine Old Testament books, which were received as the "Scripture" at the time the apostle Paul wrote these words, plus the twenty-seven New Testament works then being written, which already had been pre-authenticated by Christ (John 16:12, 13). When Paul wrote to Timothy, in the first Christian century, the complete canon (official list) of the Old Testament Scriptures in Hebrew consisted of twenty-two books. Josephus, the Jewish historian, who lived in the first century A.D., wrote that the holy books of the Hebrews were twenty-two, the same as the number of letters in their alphabet. These twenty-two Old Testament books are identical to the thirty-nine books of our Old Testament, differing only in how they were divided (e.g., First and Second Samuel combined as one book). At the same time, the twenty-seven New Testament books (in Greek) were coming into existence and had the same authority for the church as the Old Testament.

(4) "By inspiration of God," *theopneustos* in Greek, literally means "God-breathed." The author of the Bible is declared to be God Himself, as He "breathed" the words through the mouths and pens of His chosen prophets (2 Pet. I:21).

(5) The Old Testament books claim *to* be God's Word numerous times. They were accepted by prophets and the faithful through the centuries as from God, hence inerrant (2 Kin. 22:8, 11, 13). In fact, in many cases the biblical words came directly as the speech of God: "I, the LORD, keep it, I water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I keep it night and day" (Is. 27:3).

(6) The New Testament books were accepted by the church as Scripture, even in the day of their writing; thus, Peter was already considering Paul's epistles as Scripture (2 Pet. 3:15, 16). Likewise, the book of Revelation proclaims that God's judgment will befall anyone who dares to add to or subtract from "the words ... of this prophecy" (Rev. 22:18, 19). It labels itself as prophecy, a holy message from God. As part of Scripture it cannot be improved by additions or deletion; it is complete and inerrant.

See John 10:35 for Point **1-B: Christ Taught the Inerrancy of the Bible.**

1-B. Christ Taught the Inerrancy of the Bible

35 "If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)," Matt. 5: 17, 18 • 1 Pet. 1:25

1-B. Christ Taught the Inerrancy of the Bible (John 10:35)-Christ, as the eternally preexistent member of the Trinity, now God incarnate, occupies a unique place in the Scriptures: He is the God-Man from heaven.

Note that when Christ said, "The Scripture cannot be broken" (v. 35). He declared categorically, without exception or limitation, that fault cannot be found in the Scriptures. He repeated this teaching in the following instances:

(1) "*One jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law*" (Matt. 5:18). Jesus believed that the smallest letter of the Bible, a "jot" (equal in size to our apostrophe), and the smallest distinguishing part of a letter, a "tittle" (equivalent to our crossing the t), could not be dropped from the Scriptures or be found deficient. He preached inerrancy, even to the very *letters* of the words which composed God's Holy Word.

(2) "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Jesus further promised that the coming Helper, the Holy Spirit, would "bring to your [the apostles'] remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26). He attached an absolute importance to His words, and promised supernatural help to the apostles (the original twelve, plus Paul, whom He also personally sent forth), to help them recall these words. Thus He laid in advance the foundation for the New Testament Scriptures and their inerrancy (John 16:12-15).

(3) "Have you not read that He who made [created] them at the beginning 'made them male and female'" (Matt. 19:4, 5; cf. Gen. 1:27; 2:21-25). He saw the Creation account of Genesis as inerrant, absolutely true.

(4) Jesus cited Old Testament miracle stories, teaching numerous authoritative lessons from their details, and thus certifying them as true, accurate, and inerrant. Jesus substantiated the truth and reality of the characters most often disputed by unbelievers, such as:

(a) Adam and Eve (Matt. 19:4-6; cf. Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:7, 18.)

(b) Satan (Luke 11:18; cf. Ezek. 28:11-19)

(c) Noah (Matt. 24:37, 38; cf. Gen. 6:1-14)

(d) Jonah (Matt. 12:39, 40; cf. Jon. 1:7)

(e) Lot's wife (Luke 17:32; cf. Gen. 19:26)

Undeniably He took the Bible to be God's Word, true in every word, and entirely inerrant. This testimony of Christ should settle the matter finally for everyone who calls Him Lord.

See 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21 for Point **1-C: The Prophets of the Old Testament Received the Scriptures as Inerrant.**

1-C. The Prophets of the Old Testament Received the Scriptures as Inerrant

20 And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, Jer. 17:4; 27:7

21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years. Lev. 26:34-43 - Lev. 25:4,5

1-C. The Prophets of the Old Testament Received the Scriptures as Inerrant (2 Chronicles 36:20, 21)-In Point 1-B) it was seen that Christ clearly believed the Holy Scriptures to be God's written Word to mankind, absolutely authoritative and inerrant in every matter which they treated (John 10:35). Here we see that Christ was not announcing this as a new doctrine, but was placing His own seal of truth and authentication upon a belief held by Daniel and other prophets for centuries (Dan. 9:2; cf. Jer. 29:10). Note that:

(1) Moses, the author of the first five Old Testament books, was commanded by God Himself to record events in Israel's history and transmit them to Joshua (Ex. 17:14). He kept written records of Israel's journeys (Num. 33:1, 2). His writings were to be read and studied by future kings of Israel (Deut. 17:18, 19). He wrote down a body of law which the priests of Israel preserved. This law was to be read publicly every seven years in order to preserve godly living (Deut. 31:9-12). Moses' law was to be received and studied by Joshua as the secret of his success-by direct command of God (Josh. 1:7, 8).

(2) Joshua's generation saw Moses' writings not as the words of man, but as having the authority of God (Josh. 8:31-35).

(3) David charged Solomon to obey God's written law, especially the law of Moses (1 Kin. 2:3).

(4) Isaiah claimed that the words he spoke and recorded were the actual words of God, which were to be received and obeyed (Is. 1:10). Isaiah equated correctness with adherence to God's written Word (Is. 8:20).

(5) Daniel studied the writings of Jeremiah the prophet, and took these to be accurate and inerrant records of God's message to man (Dan. 9:2; cf. Jer. 25:11, 12).

(6) Malachi ends the Old Testament era with an admonition to "remember the Law of Moses ... the statutes and judgments" (Mal. 4:4).

The Scriptures were uniformly and universally received by the Old Testament prophets and writers themselves as the perfect and inerrant Word of God, the only standard of faith and practice.

Sec 2 Peter 1:21 for Point 1-D: **Christ and the Apostles Authenticated the New Testament as Inerrant.**

1-D. Christ and the Apostles Authenticated the New Testament as Inerrant

21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. [2 Tim. 3:16]

1-D. Christ and the Apostles Authenticated the New Testament as Inerrant (2 Peter 1:21)-In addition to both the Old Testament prophets and Christ, the New Testament apostles and writers agreed that the Scriptures were truly from God, hence inerrant.

(1) Peter denied that "prophecy" (speaking for God). during and after the Old Testament period, ever "came by the will of man" (v. 21)-that is, no group of theologians decided to make up or fabricate the Bible accounts. No, the Scriptures did not originate in man's mind as some have supposed. "Holy men of God [the writers of the Scriptures] spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." It was the Spirit of God who initiated the Scriptures by communicating with the biblical authors, by moving them to speak and write God's message.

(2) Peter further denied that, during the New Testament period, the apostles had followed "cunningly devised fables" (vv. 16-18). He emphasized that they did not invent the accounts circulating in already written Gospels about the miracle-working of Christ. Rather, he asserted. "we ... were eyewitnesses of His majesty." He assured us that he and the other apostles had personally seen "the power" displayed by Christ. and had even personally heard God's voice commend Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-9). Thus the apostle placed his approval on the Gospel accounts.

(3) Peter recognized the apostle Paul's epistles (letters) as being Scripture (2 Pet. 3:15, 16)

(4) John the apostle was shown the vision of the book of Revelation when he was exiled by the Romans to the Isle of Patmos (Rev. 1:9). He acknowledged that his book of Revelation is Scripture by announcing a God-appointed curse on all who would add to or subtract from any words written in this last New Testament book (Rev. 22:18, 19).

(5) Christ pre-authenticated the coming New Testament as inerrant Scripture and equal in authority to the Old Testament. He said:

(a) "I still have many things to say to you" (John 16:12). Here, at the close of His earthly ministry, Christ made it clear that God had more to communicate to man. This further communication came in the New Testament.

(b) "The Holy Spirit ... will teach you all things" (John 14:26). He thus established for us that the author of the coming New Testament would be the Holy Spirit, who would use the apostles to proclaim God's scriptural message.

(c) "The Holy Spirit ... will ... bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26). Here Christ preauthenticated the gospels.

(d) "He (the Spirit) will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). "I still have many things to say to you" (John 16:12). By these statements Christ pre-authenticated the epistles-which record the teachings of God on many topics.

(e) "He [the Spirit] will tell you things to come" (John 16:13). Here Christ preauthenticated the book of Revelation, as well as other New Testament prophecy.

(6) All New Testament books (the New Testament canon) were written either by an apostle or by an associate (traveling companion) of an apostle (one especially commissioned by the Lord Himself). The New Testament which we possess was pre-authenticated by Christ, given by the Holy Spirit, and recognized as Scripture by the apostles, just as it was written. It has been so received by the true church universal. It is thus part of the Scriptures and entirely inerrant, our only rule of faith and practice.

See Matthew 19:4 for Point **1-E: Christ and the Apostles Accepted Genesis as a Factual Account.**

1-E. Christ and the Apostles Accepted Genesis as a Factual Account

4 And He answered and said to them. "Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning 'made *them male and female*', Gen.1:27: 5:2

1-E. Christ and the Apostles Accepted Genesis as a Factual Account (Matthew 19:4)-Some skeptics have dismissed the Genesis account of creation and miracles as impossible. But the Bible says that Christ was present with God "in the beginning" and "all things were made through Him" (John I:1-3). He alone, who came from heaven, was present at Creation. He witnessed all events in biblical history. He was in a position to know truth from error, fact from myth. What He accepted as true becomes our most certain guide to truth.

(1) Christ accepted the Creation account, as well as the Adam and Eve accounts, as true (vv. 4, 5). Here He quoted Genesis 1:27 and 2:24.

(2) Paul the apostle accepted the Adam and Eve account (I Cor. 15:22, 45; I Tim. 2:13).

(3) Christ accepted the reality of Satan and his part in the fall of man (Mark 3:23; Luke 10:18; John 8:44).

(4) John, in the book of Revelation, called Satan "that serpent of old," thus attesting Genesis 3 and the Fall (Rev. 12:9),

(5) Jude accepted the reality of Cain, who killed Abel, and Enoch, who "walked with God" (Jude 11:14; cf. Gen. 4:1-15; 5:18, 21-24).

(6) Christ and the writer of the New Testament book of Hebrews accepted the reality of Cain and Abel (Matt. 23:35; Heb. 11:4; cf. Gen. 4:1-15).

(7) Christ affirmed His eternal existence prior to Abraham, and taught that Abraham knew of Christ's coming (John 8:56, 58),

(8) Christ accepted the account of Lot's wife (Luke 17:32; cf. Gen. 19:26).

(9) Christ accepted the reality of Noah and the Flood (Matt. 24:37-39; cf. Gen. 6-9).

The above are only examples of the many supporting references available. Clearly, Christ and the apostles accepted Genesis as part of the Bible; they regarded its accounts as true, and its words as true and inerrant.

See Matthew 12:40, 41 for Point 1-F: **Christ and the Apostles Accepted the Books Most Attacked by Critics.**

1-F. Christ and the Apostles Accepted the Books Most Attacked by Critics

40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Jon. 1:17

41 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn It, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here. Luke 11:32 • Jer. 3:11 • Jon. 3:5

1-F. Christ and the Apostles Accepted the Books Most Attacked by Critics (Matthew 12:40, 41)-The book of Jonah, claimed by some to be fiction, was personally authorized by the all-knowing Christ. Nor is this the only disputed book He attested:

(1) The Pentateuch (the first five Old Testament books) was written by Moses. (Moses' final death account [Deut. 34] was probably added by Joshua.) Note that in Matthew 4:4, 7, 10), Christ defeats Satan by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:16; 8:3; and 10:20.

Next to Genesis, Deuteronomy is the book most attacked by critics. Yet it was Christ's first choice in fighting Satan. Our conclusion: Deuteronomy was authenticated as inerrant Scripture, once and forever. by the all-knowing Christ.

(2) The book of Daniel was written by Daniel, about 600-550 B.C., although critics say that it was written four hundred years later at about 168 B.C. They allege this because Daniel's prophecies in chapters 2, 7, and 8 seem to extend this far into history (although, indeed, they extend much farther). These critics do not believe it possible that God's prophets could miraculously predict the future. Jesus, however, quotes Daniel as a God-inspired foreteller of the future (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14). To Christ, and therefore to us, the book of Daniel came from God, was written by Daniel, foretells the future, and is inerrant in all of its words.

(3) Some scholars divide Isaiah into three sections: "First Isaiah," chapters 1-39; "Second Isaiah," chapters 40-55; "Third Isaiah," chapters 56-66. Because of the three divisions of subject matter, different emphases, and alleged variations in style, some maintain that different authors wrote each section. However, Isaiah is mentioned by name in the New Testament some twenty-one times. For example:

(a) Matthew 15:7-9; cf. Is. 29:13.

(b) Matthew 3:3; cf. Is. 40:3.

(c) Acts 8:28-33; cf. Is. 53:7, 8.

Along with these three quotations (one of which was spoken by the lord Jesus Christ) from the three different sections of Isaiah, there are at least eighteen others from Matthew through Romans. All New Testament writers accept the unity of the book and that it is the work of one prophet.

See Psalm 119:89 for Point **1-G: Fulfilled Prophecy Shows the Inerrancy of the Bible**.

1-G. Fulfilled Prophecy Shows the Inerrancy of the Bible

89 Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.

I-G Fulfilled Prophecy Shows the Inerrancy of the Bible (Psalm 119:89)-Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matt. 24:35). He was speaking in a context of prophetic predictions. He insisted that every predictive word would find its fulfillment because it comes from God, who knows and controls the future. Other prophets have spoken throughout world history; it is apparent that none of them really knew the future, especially the distant future. Only the prophecies of the Bible have been and will be fulfilled in every detail. These prophecies come to us in the exact words of Scripture. Their past fulfillment is a proof that the Bible is God's book-true, as it claims for itself: and inerrant even in its prophetic words. For example:

(I) Prophecies of past history have come true. Amos, in 760 B.C. prophesied judgment on various nations (Amos 1:1-2, 16). All these dire words have come to pass in history, one by one.

(2) Prophecies of the moral nature of man have come true. Christ said that wars would continue (Matt. 24:5-12) and poverty would continue (Matt. 26:11); Paul prophesied the future moral corruption of the world (1 Tim. 4:1-3). Sadly, these words have stood the test of time.

(3) Prophecies concerning Israel's survival and restoration have come true. The Bible has predicted in many verses the survival of the Hebrew people and their eventual return to the land as survivors from many nations (Jer. 30: 1-1 I: 31: 1-11; Rom. 11:25. 27). The ancient Moabites, Ammonites, Canaanites, and countless others have passed away, but the lasting endurance of Israel stands as a mark of prophetic fulfillment and truth.

(4) Prophecies concerning the coming, the life, and the death of Christ have come true in hundreds of details. Micah 5:2, Isaiah 52:13-53: 1 2. Psalm 22, Zechariah 12:1 0, and other passages describe in minute detail Christ's birth in Bethlehem and His death by crucifixion. The accurate fulfillment of so many predictions, centuries in advance, demonstrates the divine origin of the Scriptures (Luke 24:27, 44).

(5) Prophecies came true even when they ran counter to historical trends. Christ said that not one stone of the temple would remain standing upon another (Matt. 24:1, 2), and today not one does. By contrast, ancient temples still remain today in Persia, Babylon, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Egypt, and Rome, their stones, walls, and columns stand nobly after 2000 years.

(6) Prophecies of the end of the age are today coming into focus in the world. In our century several nations, including Russia, Iran, Ethiopia, and Libya, have opposed the new nation of Israel (Ezek. 38:2. 5).

(7) The prophecies of Christ's second coming will yet come to pass. Armies will come to Armageddon (Rev. 16:16; 19: 19,) and Christ will return to rescue Israel and put the world in order (Rev. I 9:11-16). The Word of God is, and shall be, true and inerrant in its every word.