

## Doctrine of Bible

### The Authority of the Bible Reviewed

1. When John Calvin spoke of the Bible, he argued for the authority of Scripture based on “indicia” or indicators.
2. Some of the evidence Calvin gave attention to was the antiquity of Scripture.
3. Long ago God supplemented the general revelation of Himself with the written revelation of His Word.
4. No book has been subjected to more critical scrutiny than the Bible, and yet it remains authoritative, and widely accepted in every generation.
5. Another evidence, for Calvin, was “the heavenliness of the matter”. The Bible speaks to the heart, and makes it glad.
  - *Psalms 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*
6. The Scriptures speak of many subjects in such a way that the profundity of the Word of God is compelling, and must be believed. There is the “ring of truth.”
7. The Scriptures speak of difficult subjects that expose painful truth.
  - There is the story of the disobedience of Moses in Numbers 20.
  - There is the story of Eli’s wicked sons in 1 Samuel 2.
  - There is the story of Nathan confronting King David with his sin in 2 Samuel 12.
  - There is the story of Jesus rebuking Peter in Matthew 16.
8. The Scriptures speak of subjects that take the heart far beyond the natural realm, and gives it hope.
  - The Bible speaks of the majesty of God in heaven in Psalm 8.
  - The Bible speaks about the love of God in John 3.
  - The Bible speaks about the divinity of Christ in John 1.
  - The Bible speaks about the hope of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.
9. When God speaks to people, they perceive it is the Word of the Lord.
  - *John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*

10. Calvin also talked about the harmony of the Scriptures. Despite the apparent contradictions of the Bible, there are none. There are variant accounts to be noticed, but these are not contradictions.
11. The morality of Scripture has been challenged. Nevertheless, the Moral Law remains necessary for all societies.
12. One of the most powerful proofs of the Scriptures are the prophecies specifically fulfilled in the future. There are over 300 specific, detailed prophecies about the Messiah, fulfilled in Christ.
13. Despite the “indicia”, despite all the evidences for the Bible as the Word of God, people will not be persuaded apart from the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit.
14. Objective evidence is not enough to demand a positive verdict from the unbelieving apart from divine illumination.
15. Apart from the Holy Spirit, the unbeliever remains under divine judgment.
  - *Mark 4:11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: 12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.*
16. Calvin did not revert to a subjective acceptance of the believer. The Holy Spirit does not give new information to a person which the non-believer does not have. Nor does the Holy Spirit give a new argument for Christ, and the truth of Scripture, that the non-believer does not have.
17. What the Holy Spirit does do is cause a person to acquiesce, or surrender into the “indicia”.
18. The unbeliever has truth, but he is not persuaded by it. Even if the truth were given to him by someone who came back from the dead, the truth would not be believed.
  - *Luke 16:31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*
19. The elect are persuaded by the truth that is given to them. They are only persuaded by the moving of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts and minds.
20. The Holy Spirit does not give new truth, or more evidence, or a better argument.
21. What the Spirit does, is to break down the bias of the unbeliever that makes us willing to embrace the claims of Christ.

22. How the Spirit persuades, is a mystery of Sovereign grace. That the Spirit persuades, is manifested in a changed life.

“I know not why God’s wondrous grace  
To me He hath made known,  
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love  
Redeemed me for His own.

But “I know Whom I have believed,  
And am persuaded that He is able  
To keep that which I’ve committed  
Unto Him against that day.”

I know not how this saving faith  
To me He did impart,  
Nor how believing in His Word  
Wrought peace within my heart.

I know not how the Spirit moves,  
Convincing men of sin,  
Revealing Jesus through the Word,  
Creating faith in Him.”

Daniel W. Whittle, 1883