

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

What's So Special About The Bible?

PART

4

TITLE

The Authority Of The Bible

SCRIPTURE

2 Timothy 3:14-17



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It's good to see you. I hope that you are well, and those of you're here, you're safe. I'm so glad about that. If you are at home, we're glad that you've also joined us. If you have a Bible turn with me to Second Timothy. In a few moments we're going to read in chapter three. And if you are a brand new with us, we're really glad that you're here. If you don't have, and you had a Bible, there's lots of Bibles in the cheers near you. If you don't have one at home, take that home as a gift. We're in a series it's called What's So Special About the Bible. And my hope is that this will be encouraging to you, and it'll also be confirming to you that the Bible is true. And so I want to pray for us even before we start.

Father in heaven, we bow before you, our maker, and we want to hear from you. And I pray for those who are either here in the room or who have tuned in, or will tune in at some point in time, who are uncertain in their own heart, whether they can or should trust Christ primarily based on their uncertainty of the reliability of the Bible. I ask that you would use this as further confirmation in their heart to help them to see that the Bible can be trusted because the Bible was written by you. I ask God that you would lovingly and mercifully open up their heart.

I also pray for those who believe the Bible is true and yet are here again on a Sunday or maybe have tuned in, we know that because of even the smallest things like weather that we form in our own minds, these feelings that this day is exceptional. And when it's exceptional, sometimes we get really distracted. And when we get distracted, we forget that this may be the very last Sunday that we're on the earth, and for some it will be. And so we ask that you would help us. Would you peak our interest? Would you help us to lean in. For those who are at home and who are looking around their room at lots of movement and things to hold or touch or look at, just ask God that you would gravitate their heart to your word. You would help us as a body to learn why we rely and think the Bible is so special. And so we look to you in faith. Would you speak through weakness? We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Well, early on in our marriage, my marriage to my wife Tabatha, I made an unassisted decision. And if you are either brain new in marriage or you're engaged, or one day you want to be married, this is a really important thing to consider, is to limit those number of decisions that you make unassisted. And so my wife was gone. We were first year marriage. She was not at home. And I made a choice to get rid of several of my sweaters in one of hers in order to fit our clothes into the small apartment closet that we had moved to and that we were sharing. And I learned soon enough that I should have discarded more of my sweaters and none of hers, which is a great life lesson in marriage. But it really led to this conclusion. And it's not only true in that true story, but it's true in life, is that sometimes our pursuit of one thing leads us to mistakenly discard something of much greater value.

And you can see that today in our culture. A culture that is blindly and undiscerningly bent and pursuing the virtue of sameness. Where everything is the same and it leads us to imagine that equality is a lack of difference and distinction, even when God is the one who created difference and distinction. And as a result of that, we have lost so many things. Men used to stand when a woman entered the room and the reason is

because they wanted to honor her God-given distinction. Marriage was an institution that used to be esteemed as sacred, protected, provided for, by people who were in a marriage and people who weren't because of its God-given distinction. Citizens used to speak of their elected leaders with civility and decency and honor, in spite of their remarkable disapproval because of the God-given distinction that was endowed to that office.

But in blurring the lines of what is honorably distinct, we as a culture have foolishly discarded many treasures. People in our day and age who think that we as a church are so strange that we as a people called providence, and many other people like us are so strange because we believe the Bible is true, failed to see that the Bible is honorably distinct. That when it sits on a shelf with lots of other books, that it's not equal to the other books. And many of us have a Bible in our hand, we own a Bible, we read the Bible. We would say, we believe the Bible. We would even say that we believe the Bible is superior, maybe in every other way to other books. And yet many of us would have a really difficult time explaining why. And that's what this series is about.

It's to help us as a church family, explain why we believe the Bible is so special. And so in previous weeks we have looked at the fact that it is credible. We've looked at its message. We've looked at its inspiration and here this morning we want to look at the authority. Truly, if the Bible is reliable and credible, if it is inspired by God, then ultimately what we look at today is the obvious conclusion. And that is, it is authoritative. If God almighty inspired the book, then it has unique authority. Just like in previous weeks, if you want the notes, either tomorrow or later on, or if you want to look at them right now, you can actually go to pray.org/bible, and you can find all of what I'm about to say. But more important than turning there, I want you to turn, I hope that you'll turn to Second Timothy. This was the first book of the Bible that I memorized.

It's unique. If you can say it, it's honorably distinct of Paul's writings because it's his last one. Now Paul, if you're brand new to the Bible, this man named Paul, who's a Pharisee, he was a really religious man trying to earn his way to God. He knew that he couldn't, he knew he was failing and so he became really mean and cruel to other people. And suddenly Jesus met him and utterly changed his life, transformed his life. And he gave the rest of his life, trying to help people to see that they can be forgiven of their sin by trusting in Jesus Christ, who died on a cross for our sin and rose from the dead. And when Paul is writing this letter, you have to understand, his days are numbered. Now you might say, well, all of our days are numbered. They are, all of our days are numbered, but he knew his number was very small.

He had already been condemned as a criminal in the Roman court for his faith in Jesus Christ. And he was literally in prison waiting for the executioner to come. He knows his days are limited and instead of sulking or complaining or counting the number of scars on his body that he talks about in the book of Galatians that have been received because of his faith in Jesus Christ, instead of second guessing the value of Jesus Christ or following Jesus Christ, he spends the limited time he has left writing a young pastor named Timothy. Paul didn't have a son, as far as we know, and Timothy had a dad, but he wasn't a believer in Christ. And so he grew up with a mom and a grandma we're told, who taught him about Jesus.

And so Paul recognized that he had this need. And so for 15 years, he invested in Timothy. He mentored Timothy. He taught Timothy what a biblical man looks like. He invested in him to the place to where now at the very end of his life, he hears from prison that this same Timothy that he has poured so much into is now wavering in his faith. He's in a pit of spiritual discouragement. And this is really important because he was also the pastor of the church of Ephesus. So if you turn in your Bible at some point in time, and you look at the book of Ephesians that was written to the church in Ephesus. Well, Timothy is the pastor of that church. And the pastor's wavering. He feels timid. He's overwhelmed by persecution, and he feels weak in his faith.

And Paul knows that he's extending the baton of the gospel to him. He's about to lose his life. And Timothy is simply too weak in his faith to reach up in order to take it. And so Paul writes him a letter, and in chapter three, starting in verse 14, this is what he says. "But as for you continue in what you have learned and firmly believe, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood, you have been acquainted with the sacred writings"... That's the scriptures... "which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is breath out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training and righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

And so the question is what's so special about the Bible? And the first thing that I want you to see is that the Bible is the ultimate authority. That's why it's so special. The Bible is the ultimate authority. You see, when we look at different books and we give a blue ribbon of ultimate authority to one of them, it's because that book has the ultimate author. And that's what Paul says. Paul says in verse 16, he says, "All scripture is breathed out by God." Theopneustos. It's a Greek word. It's only used here. It's actually two Greek words put together. Theo means God. Theology is the study of God. Theopneustos is where we get pneumonia, breath. So he takes two words, combines them together. God breath. God breathed. Paul is echoing Peter. What we looked at last week when Peter taught us about the inspiration of scripture. When he said in Second Peter One, "No prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation for no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the holy spirit."

You see, just like a boat that's being carried along the water when wind fills its sails. So the Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit of God filled the hearts of human writers who had observed things in their life, God moving in their life, carried them along, inside the context of their education, their culture, their knowledge, their vocabulary, their personality, and their perspective of real events to write God's words. What that means is that when you read the Bible, you are hearing the breath, the voice of God himself. And when you read the Bible, one of the things you find is that when God opens up his mouth and speaks things happen, the very first page of the Bible God's speaks in the world is created.

In the same book of Genesis, you fast forward to chapter 12 and what you find is that God, his words to a man named Abraham, it began the sequence of events that led to the formation, not only of Israel, but other nations. In Exodus chapter three, God's words to a displaced prince who is totally disillusioned with his life, spending his time with sheep, initiated a sequence of events that not only changed his life, but brought about

a great, great deliverance for his people. In Joshua chapter one, God speaks and elicits courage in the life of a leader. You keep reading through the pages of scripture, Old and New Testament and what you find is that the testimony, the written testimony of human beings, who are watching God move, in the Old Testament and New Testament bears witness to the fact that when God speaks things happen. In the Old Testament, we find passages like Psalm 107 that says that, “God sent out his word and healed them and delivered them from their destruction.”

You get to the New Testament and First Peter says, “And you have been born again, not of perishable sea, but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God.” And what’s interesting is that even after the Bible, the last word, the last book was placed within the canon of scripture and suddenly then generations and centuries of church histories passed where people are opening up the book, just like you and I are today looking at it and reading it. And what we find is this is that even when people who are observing and hearing God speak through the pages of his word, things continue to happen. In the fourth century, there was an African man named Augustine, who was absolutely overwhelmed by his guilt and shame and spiritual weakness, through himself onto the ground of the courtyard.

This is his own journal, who’s describing when God changed his life. And as he’s laying on the courtyard, just imagining his despair spiritually before a holy God not knowing how to appease God, how to make things right, how to get rid of the guilt and shame in his own heart. He overhears is a child, an actual child singing, take it up and read it, take up and read it. So he picks up a Bible. He turns it to Romans, and he learns that Christ came to save him from his sin. Augustine places his faith in Christ, and this nobody of a man becomes Augustine. One of the great theologians in Christianity.

In the 16th century, there’s a monk who’s absolutely miserable at his attempts to earn his salvation. His name is Martin Luther. He’s overwhelmed at the fact that he knows, he knows that if his attempts at righteousness can’t even pass the bar of his own evaluation, how in the world is he going to pass the bar of God’s holy evaluation? And so Martin Luther turns to the book of Romans and there for the first time he reads of a righteousness from God that comes to us when we place our faith in Jesus Christ. Martin Luther is utterly changed.

In the 19th century there’s a man named Charles Spurgeon. And Spurgeon was already a believer in Jesus Christ. He was already a pastor and he’s asked to speak at an auditorium in which he’s never spoken at. This is before the day of microphones. And so he went the night before to the auditorium to test the acoustics. He stands up on stage and thinking, he’s the only one in the room. He says, “Behold, the lamb of God who takes away to the sin of the world.” His text for the next day, and then begins to read some of his notes and unknowingly to him there is a person cleaning up in the balcony who hears the gospel that’s being practiced for the next day. He places his faith and trust in Jesus Christ and he goes home. There’s a record of him going home and telling his family that he has finally been forgiven of his sins.

This is what God means when he says in Isaiah 55, “So shall my word be that goes out for my mouth, it shall not return to be empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” The Bible is the absolute authority because it has the absolute author. It is the authority of all matters of faith in life. It is the plum line by which we are to measure every truth claim. And it is the power of God unto salvation to anyone who believes. And were it to be that nobody in the entire world paid reference to or believed the Bible, it would not fold for all humanity is like grass and the grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. The Bible is the ultimate authority.

And well, what’s amazing is it’s written by somebody who loves us so much. And that’s why the second thing I want you to see that he teaches is the Bible’s authority is profitable to man. It’s profitable to man. The Bible is beneficial in its authority over our life, because it is written by God who loves us, whose passion constantly is not to restrict what is pleasant, but to protect what is important. He loves us. And this is what we find in verse 16. It says, “All scripture is breathed out by God.” And what else is it? It’s profitable. Friends, the authority of the Bible is not a liability that robs us of life. It’s an asset that profits our life. Then this Bible is profitable first and foremost, because verse 15 says that, “It’s able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

This is the first way that it’s the most profitable to you. It’s eternally profitable. Even if it profited you in every other way, but it couldn’t profit you in helping you get to heaven, it would be less than profitable. But this is primarily profitable because the truth that’s found in the Bible makes us wise for salvation. The Bible teaches us and affirms our guilt that tells us what we already know, that we have sinned. We feel guilt. We feel shame. We’ve made decisions that we wish we wouldn’t make. But the Bible doesn’t just leave us there by affirming our guilt. The Bible goes on to teach us that God’s love for us, led him to make a promise to send a rescuer and then make good on that promise by sending his son. Jesus Christ came to the earth and he lived like no one else has ever lived, the perfect wisdom and love, compassion, and mercy. He cared for people like nobody has ever cared for people.

And this Jesus we’re told in the Bible lived without sin and then declared to his disciples, we’re going to Jerusalem and there I’m going to be falsely accused. I’m going to be arrested. I’m going to be condemned. I’ll be crucified. And then I’m going to rise from the dead on the third day, in order to prove to you that I’m the son of God. And then Jesus went and did that. He walked to Jerusalem, he was falsely accused. He was bound. He was condemned. He was crucified for our sin. And then he rose from the dead. In the amazing invitation that Jesus speaks with his own mouth and then authorizes the writers of the New Testament to explain to us, is news that is unparalleled in its prophet to man.

The rest of the Bible comes to us after Jesus rises from the dead. And he says, “Come let’s reason together. You have not lived as you ought to have lived, but I have. And if you will place your faith, not on yourself, but if you’ll place your faith in me, if you’ll admit that you need a savior, if you’ll place your faith in me and confess me as Lord, then all that you deserve in your sin before God will be put upon me on the cross, and all

that I deserve before God in my righteous life will be given to you forever.” This is why it’s called the gospel. It’s really good news. It’s eternally profitable for man. You can trust Christ today and be forgiven of your sin.

But the prophet of the Bible, it even goes beyond that. In verse 16, he says, “It’s also profitable for teaching, for reprove for correction and for training and righteousness.” The Bible profits us by teaching us how to live, teaching us how to love, teaching us how to avoid shame and guilt, teaching us how to experience good. But the Bible recognizes that we don’t always walk that path. And so the Bible also profits us by reproofing us. That means warning us, telling us when we’re in the wrong. Telling us when we’re about to walk off a cliff.

Not only that, the Bible profits us by correcting us. Not only saying, hey, that’s wrong, but showing us how to get back into alignment. If you look into the mirror and you look at your teeth and you go, “Hey, they’re not an alignment.” You might go to an orthodontist. And when you get to the orthodontist, they may look at your mouth and go, you need braces. And when they put braces on your mouth, not only does it bring alignment, but it only brings alignment through a bunch of pain. So it is with the word of God, those that are trained by it experience temporary pain. But what they receive is eternal profit. Alignment of their life back into the will of God. You may be here and you think I am so far out of the will of God, there’s no way back. The Bible says there is a way back and I’ll show you how to get there.

The fourth thing it says it profits us is it trains us in righteousness. If you’ve ever had a trainer at the gym, they not only teach you the right way to exercise, but they’re there to motivate. They’re there to speak into your ear when you don’t want to lift anymore. The Bible’s instruction, reproof, correction, and training, they may come to us in painful moments, but they’re so profitable. And what’s true is this is if the authority of the Bible is not the source by which we lean on to determine what’s right and wrong and make our decisions, we will still have a source. Every single one of us lean on something. We all lean on somebody. We all lean either on ourself or someone else or some source of authority to help us to make a determination as to what is right and how to make our decisions.

And what I want you to know is that if you lean on anything else other than the Bible, with the ultimate author, you’re going to lean on something that is less reliable. For many of us, we lean on our own desires. And what I mean by that is you can hear yourself. You can say, “See, I just do what feels right.” And by the way, don’t point fingers, because anytime you’ve ever had regret in your life over a decision it’s because you probably said, “You know what? This feels right. I think this must be the right thing. I’m going to choose this.” It’s only natural for us to do this. And for people in the culture, they make their heart, this unassailable idol of rightness. If it feels right to my heart, it must be right.

But let me ask you something. Have your feelings ever betrayed you? Have your feelings ever proven to be unreliable? You see if you live long enough, if you’ve lived over 10 years and you remember making decisions 10 years ago, there’s some of those decisions that you made you now feel a sense of regret, and it proves that your feelings weren’t reliable. But let me tell you something. If you live another 10 years, you’re going to make

decisions today that will actually yield a similar level of shame and regret on some of those decisions.

And the reason is because our heart, Jeremiah says, “And the Bible is deceitful above all things.” It lies to us. It’s not the ultimate authority. And some of us, we go, yeah, that’s true. I’ve made bad decisions. So I don’t rely on myself. I rely on public consensus. I just look at what the culture sure around me says is true and right. And, and maybe if I’m not reliable, maybe the fact that there’s a lot of other people that are also weighing in on it, like we’ve heard in the Bible, there’s multiple advisors. And this world, oh my culture is, there’s lots of advisors of what is right and true. But let me ask you something. How is this a reliable guide when cultures change?

I mean, how many of you honestly have either laughed, snickered, or made fun of the culture, technology, or values of your great grandparents generation? And you realize that if you live long enough, or if you don’t, your great grandchildren are going to laugh, snicker and mock our culture at our values and our technologies. And so surely a culture that is changing is not all that reliable. And furthermore, how in the world do we rely on the rightness of one culture when another culture of human beings that are currently are alive, when those value systems contradict one another? For example, if you go to Middle East today, what you’re going to find is that the virtue of aggression, in particular when somebody is wronged, it is more honorable than sexual freedom. And yet here in America, aggression in particular, if it’s public like in the workplace, is often met with mandatory anger management classes and sexual freedom is seen and celebrated as courageous pursuit of being true to oneself.

So how do we know that our culture’s right and someone else’s culture is wrong? And how can we blindly rely on our culture’s value when history is proven that certain cultures, including our own or parts of that culture were utterly corrupt? Now, when you build your life on the Bible, what you find is that you’re being guided to live in a manner consistent with reality. When you buy a car and you go and you need fuel, you fill it with the recommended fuel. And when you do this, you don’t resent it. You don’t complain about it. You don’t feel oppressed by it because those people who recommended the fuel are the same people that engineered the car.

Well, God engineered you and me. He built us and he gives the recommendations of how to live. And he is wise and he is loving and he is unchanging. And although it is true that sometimes it seems initially costly to live according to his plan, over time the prophet always reflects his wisdom. And that leads to the third thing I want you to see. And that is the Bible’s authority is hopeful for man. You notice that Paul urges Timothy, to continue in the scriptures. To continue in the scriptures and then verse 17. He says why, “That the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Now you may imagine that the hope that I am alluding to here is that we can grow complete. And although that’s true and hopeful, that’s not what I want you to see. I want you to look at these words, man of God. This is actually a title it’s used in the Old Testament more times than in the New Testament, but it’s only used to refer to some of the great spiritual giants like Moses, David, Elijah, Elisha. In other words, when somebody

looked at somebody's life that was utterly consumed and distinguished by godliness, they would go, "Now that's a man of God." But in the New Testament, it is used one time. And it's not used of any of the apostles. It's not ascribed to Peter or John, or even to the apostle Paul. The only time that it's used directly towards somebody is about Timothy. It's in First Timothy chapter six, verse 11 Paul's first letter to him. And he says, "But as for you, oh man of God, that's what I see in you," is what he says, "flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness and gentleness."

And the only other time that the term man of God has used in the New Testament is right here in verse 17. When it says, "And the man of God will be complete thoroughly equipped for every good word." And it's written to him and to us when Timothy is struggling with his faith. He's wavering, he's discouraged, he's doubting. He feels weak. And knowing his friends struggle. Paul, what he's doing is he's setting not only before Timothy, but he's setting before you and me, the promise to which he and we can aspire. In other words, in fact, I would even say that had Paul been writing a Christian sister, I think his point, he would've said that the woman of God may be complete.

The point here is simply to show this, is it a noble legacy and a life that is equipped for every good worth is absolutely available for anybody who is willing to be trained by the word of God, no matter our weakness today. You may say you don't understand how weak I am in my faith. You place yourself under the training of the Bible and what you will find is it will lead you to a life where your legacy becomes more distinguished and where your life is more thorough in its understanding and practice of every good work. That's hopeful for you and for me.

So what's so special about the Bible? What's so special is it is the ultimate authority that is inspired by the ultimate author. And as such, the Bible is beneficial and hopeful. Jesus Christ believed that the Bible was true. And agreeing with him, let me offer a few applications. The first is one that I have mentioned every week in the series. You're going to hear it today and you're going to hear it next Sunday also, and that is, I want to encourage you to read the Bible daily. You see those who go to the gym only once a week remain weak. Those who remove their braces after having them installed by an orthodontist every other week, fail to see alignment. It's the consistency.

If however, we will put ourselves under the Bible's teaching daily, we will grow strong and our lives will grow in alignment. And let me encourage those of you who love to read, I know there's a lot of great authors out there. I love A.W. Tozer and C.S. Lewis. There's a lot of people that I like to read because they have a lot of insight into the Bible and the truth, are creative and their thought and it's all was a wonderful thing. But let me remind you about something, God didn't breathe out any of their books. Only one. And our reading, whatever it is, should reflect our conviction that God breathed the one book. Read the Bible.

Second thing I want to encourage you to consider is to obey the Bible quickly. The Bible can be treated in ways that it's not intended to be treated. For example, it can be treated like an echo chamber where you speak

into it and then expect it to reverberate the echoes of your own desires. That's not what the Bible is. No, the Bible is a mirror. A mirror that reveals what God sees that is in place and out of place in our own life. That's what James says. "Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in the mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like." In other words, to hear the Bible, to read it and not to obey it is like standing before a mirror after a long night's rest, and then walking away from the mirror without addressing the things that the mirror has highlighted that are out of alignment.

The Bible tells us specifically to admit our sin and put our trust in Christ. And my question is, have you? The Bible tells us that everyone who has trusted in Jesus Christ, that that reality is supposed to be put on display by being baptized as a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ. My question is, have you? Many of us have heard over the last year or read over the last year, many things where you say, "I should probably work on that." Have you? The encouragement is not only to obey it, but to obey it quickly. And that leads to the third in the last thing, which happens to be the only application that Paul gives to Timothy and that is to continue in the Bible faithfully.

This will be particularly important as our culture continues to drift away from a biblical system of values and therefore creates enemies and villains out of those who love and hold fast to the Bible. In light of the fact that people were deceiving and being deceived. In fact, I don't have it on the screen, but if you simply look at verse 14 when he says, "But as for you"... He starts, "But as for you." He's making a comparison. If you just look at your Bible in verse 13, it says that there are people who are being deceived and deceiving other people to walk away from the scriptures. And he's saying in light of the fact, there's a lot of people walking away from the authority of the Bible and wrecking their life in culture. "But as for you continue in it." The word continue, it feels like such a weak... It's like continue. It means hold fast. Grip it tightly. Don't let it fall away from you. No matter how much wind is blowing in the culture against you.

Jude verse three says, "contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints." The faith that he's talking about here is not your personal faith. The faith that he is talking about here is the historical body of doctrine that the Bible teaches. That there is one God, three persons, the father, the son, and the spirit. The historical body of truth is the humanity of Christ. It's deity of Christ. It's the death of Christ. It's the resurrection of Christ. It's the authority of Christ. It's the second coming of Christ. That's just what he is talking about. And it says that it's not invented. It's delivered by God and it's delivered once for all.

And what that means is really significant. God does continue to speak through other means. He speaks through teachers and books. He can speak to our own conscience as we're reading and he can convict us of something and he can give us an insight. God can do those things. And he does do those things. But never does he violate his written word that was once for all delivered to the saints by a secondary source. And therefore every truth claim, whether it comes from a pope or a priest or a pastor, a coach, a parent, a teacher, a friend must be measured against the standard of the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints in the

Bible.

See when truth gets distorted in our minds, we begin trusting what isn't real. We begin making a God in our own image that authorizes our proven unreliable desires. And the consequences of this are not only steep for the individual, but also for the church and for the culture. And this is why God desiring to protect us and motivate us to hold fast, he made this appeal. "Oh, that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever."

Providence, I know that we live in a culture that every day passes will become more aggressive to those who hold fast to the Bible. But we are going to hold fast to the Bible. And for your good and the everlasting good of your descendants. I urge you to hold fast to the Bible. So let me pray. Father, in heaven, we, we bow before you and consider it a privilege to open your Bible and to read and to learn from it. And I pray for those who are considering trust in Christ, that you would lead them to that decision even now, to admit that they have a sin problem. And to believe that you are the solution to that sin problem, that you died in rose again, and that you are the Lord.

I ask that you would help them to confess you as Lord now. And God, I pray for those whose honest skepticism keeps them from seeing at this point in time, the reliability of the Bible. I simply asked that you would use what we have looked at and use that as a contribution to the other things that you're doing in their life, that would confirm in their spirit that this is true. God, I pray for us as a church family that no matter how brisk the headwind might be in our culture or in our own hearts or families to hold fast to the Bible, we ask that you would give us courage to continue in them. So we look to you in faith. We sing to you now with a full heart. Thank you that you are the only way Jesus, but you are the way, and we pray this in Jesus name. Amen.



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