



# COURSE INTRODUCTION

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There are many divine attributes of God that are often celebrated in the lives of Christians, as well as in the life of the church. We celebrate God's omnipotence, as we reflect upon His great power. We acknowledge God's sovereignty, as we look back on how He has woven all of the events of our lives together for our good and His Glory. We revere God as holy, because He is indeed set apart. With every acknowledgement of God's character, the Scriptures attest to the fact that we serve a God that is **active**. The Bible is the account of **God's action** in the world, and His purpose with all creation.

The writing of the Bible took place over 1600 years and is the work of over forty human authors. It is quite an amazing collection of 66 books with very different genres of literature, writing styles, and original audiences. This compilation contains the exact message God desired us to have. This message is revealed to us in two short stories (Old & New Testaments), that combined reveal one Grand story that points fallen humanity directly to Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen King!

<i>Old Testament</i>	<i>New Testament</i>
<b>39 Books</b>	<b>27 Books</b>
<b>Creation, Fall, Anticipation</b>	<b>Redemption, Restoration</b>

Over the next four weeks this class is designed to help you answer the following questions about the Bible:

- Who wrote it?                      Week 1
- Why should I trust it?            Week 2
- Why 66 books?                      Week 3
- How should I respond ?        Week 4

It is our deepest desire for every follower of Jesus Christ to be equipped with every tool they need to GROW in their relationship with God in order to SERVE Him more effectively. With that in mind, this course is designed to provide every participant with the understanding of how the Bible as we know it came to be. It is our goal that every participant will gain clarity on

the origin, trustworthiness, and history of the Bible as we journey together through the dramatic stories behind our English Bibles. Ultimately, our prayer is that it will lead you to cherish the Word of God even more as you strive to live its out.



# CLASS TWO

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## WHY SHOULD I TRUST IT?

As we examine the question “Why should I trust it?” Following the natural progression of thought that will help us begin to answer this question. If we believe that an ***Omniscient God*** is the author of the Scriptures, then it is an inevitable conclusion that an all-knowing God would communicate His word ***without error***. There are three primary truths that emerge from this progression of thought that will lead our time:

1. God cannot lie or speak falsely (Num. 23:19, Titus 1:2, Heb. 6:18)
2. God is immutable (Mal. 3:6, Heb. 13:8, James 1:17)
3. God is trustworthy (Psalm 18:30, Psalm 33:4)

### **I. The Doctrine of Inerrancy**

***Inerrancy*** - is the conviction that the Bible in its original manuscripts doesn't not affirm anything that is contrary to fact. The Scriptures are completely without error.

#### **a. Historical Test**

1. *Chronology* – The events of Scripture occur within a historical context. Recorded history will align with several instances that are revealed in Scripture
2. *Nations, Kings, and Kingdoms*- History attests that the duration of Kingdoms and the reign of Kings does align with the Biblical record of Nations, Kings, and Kingdoms.
3. *Places*- Many of the places that are seen in the Scriptures can be visited today.

#### **b. Bibliographic Test**

1. *Autographs* – These are original manuscripts of the Scriptures in its final form. Through a process called “textual criticism” we are able to analyze various fragments, copies, and translations with the goal of recovering the original manuscript in its final form.

2. Copies – every ancient edition of the Scriptures that we have today is a copy. These are hand- written, word for word copies that were preserved.
  - i. Masorettes- a 5th Century, Jewish clan of the tribe of Ben Asher that was devoted to copying the Old Testament.
  - ii. Messengers- The Apostles would send messengers to deliver epistles and accounts to different churches and these scrolls would be copied and preserved.
3. Dead Sea Scrolls- a Jewish manuscript library that was discovered in 1947 in a Qumran cave, which is present day West Bank of Israel. This is the most significant Biblical archeological discovery.

**c. Internal Test**

1. Real People- The Bible is filled with actual people that non-Christian history and archeology acknowledge as having lived in the regions that the Bible states.
2. Eye Witnesses- Christian communities and Eye witnesses kept testimonies closely connected to the original events in the Bible. The Scriptures also attest to having eye witnesses.
3. Good, Bad, The Ugly- The Bible records both the accomplishments and failures of all of its primary characters. The vulnerability of the authors attests to the authenticity of the events in Scripture.

**d. External Test**

1. Geography- Events recorded in Scripture occurred in actual places that can be visited today. Ruling empires, place names, and geographical boundaries may have changed but the actual landscape of the Bible still exists
2. Archeology- Thousands of detailed archeological finds have been discovered that provide physical evidence of the material that is described in detail within the Bible. This is one of the most convincing proofs.

## II. Major Challenges with Inerrancy

1. Faith and Practice only – This is the belief that Bible should only be trusted in the areas that are directly related to religious faith and ethical conduct. This viewpoint does not acknowledge miracles, historical events, or creation.
2. Historical Misuse- The difficult reality that we are faced with is that the Scriptures have been misused to support systems, institutions, and actions that do not align with the Christian faith. Many have used inerrancy to support their wrongful interpretation of the Scriptures.
  - a. American Evangelicalism - American Church history will reveal that many Mainline White Evangelical Christian churches and institutions were complicit in matters of Racial injustice and inequality. Their affirmation of the Doctrine of Inerrancy, while not affirming the human dignity of people of color has been a stumbling block toward the acceptance of this doctrine.
  - ii. The 3 S's – These primary issues have been recent controversial topics that have caused many to question this doctrine.
    1. Sexual Ethics
    2. Submission
    3. Slavery

### Discussion Questions:

1. Which of the 4 tests of Inerrancy do you believe is the most convincing? Why?
2. Which of the major challenges with inerrancy have you struggled with? Why?

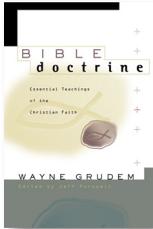
### Memory Verse:

Psalm 119:160

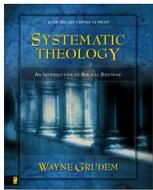
Romans 10:17

# READING LIST

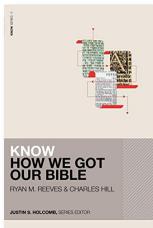
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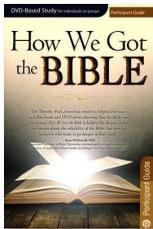
***Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith***  
by Wayne Grudem



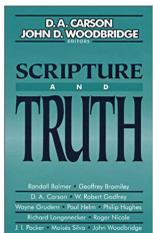
***Systematic Theology***  
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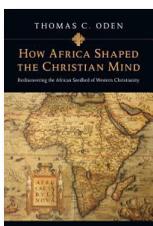
***Know How We Got the Bible***  
by Ryan M. Reeves and Charles E. Hill



***How We Got the Bible***  
by Timothy Paul Jones



***Scripture and Truth***  
by D.A. Carson and John Woodbridge



***How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind***  
by Thomas C. Oden