



August 28, 2016
Celebration · 9:00 am
Elevation · 11:00 am
Pastors Eric Wakeling and Doug Brown

The Bible is Authority

What is your level of surrender to the authority of the Bible?

- I don't trust the Bible so I don't surrender to it.
- I trust the Bible but I don't give it authority in my life.
- I trust the Bible and I give it authority in my life.
- I trust the Bible but I don't understand how to give it authority in my life.

Authority in our world is greatly misunderstood and misused.

The Bible authoritatively speaks to the world's biggest problems.

- Genesis 1:1 – God is before all things.
- Exodus 20:1-3 – God is before all gods, and speaks to us.
- **Matthew 28:18 – All authority has been given to Jesus who saves us.**
- Titus 2:15 – We ought to teach about Jesus with authority.

The authority of the Bible in our lives looks like transformation because of Jesus' work.

Authority must be understood through the different approaches each genre of literature speaks in the Bible.

- **O.T. Historical Narrative– The Big God Story, Redemption, Love, Deliverance**
 - Examples – Genesis, most of Exodus, most of Numbers, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. Additionally, the prophetic books Daniel, Jonah and Haggai are primarily narratives, along with large portions of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the poetic book Job.
 - Primary contribution: To inform and shape our worldview about the eternal plan that God is working out universally in human history and also to underscore our continuity with the children of Israel as the people of God. Therefore, ask, "What does this passage tell us about God (the Hero), His plan, or the role that His people should be playing in His plan? How do these stories point to Jesus and the need for a redeemer?"
 - Secondary contribution: To give us positive and negative models of old covenant believers making choices to trust God. Therefore, ask, "What positive or negative model might this passage be setting before us to teach us about trusting God in the midst of His plan?"
 - Humans are the main characters, but God is the hero of the story
- **The Law**
 - Examples – Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy
 - Primary contribution: To explain how God relates to us within a covenantal relationship and how His holiness and Israel's sin could be reconciled through Israel's obedience to the covenant (Law). Within this relationship, the law also demonstrates the concrete, practical and multi-faceted areas in which God's people should obey and be transformed. To point us to Jesus and our need for a redeemer. Therefore, ask, "What does this passage tell us about God and His holiness, about Israel and her sin, and about how Israel needed to obey in order to maintain her covenant relationship with God?"
 - Secondary contribution: To give us ethical and moral illustrations of godly responses to a wide variety of life's situations. Therefore, ask, "Are these areas still relevant under the new covenant as areas I should be concerned about and areas in which I should be seeking to obey God?"
- **Psalms**
 - Primary contribution: To model what a God-centered view of life is like, through expressions of worship and prayer, and the way believers may express their deepest needs, pains, and concerns to God in passionate prayer and worship. Therefore, ask, "What does this psalm tell us about how God's presence and work connects with our deepest concerns and emotions in the midst of difficult or joyous circumstances. How do these show our need for Jesus?"
 - Secondary contribution: To give us models for worshiping God. Therefore, ask, "What does this psalm tell us about how we should pray, praise, and generally express our hearts' desires to God in individual and corporate worship?"
- **Proverbs and Wisdom books**
 - Examples – Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.
 - Primary contribution: They directly or indirectly instruct us how to make wise choices in the nitty-gritty, daily affairs of life and in the difficult, inscrutable events of life. Therefore, ask, "What does this passage tell us about what wise, skillful living would be in the area being discussed? What general pattern does this reveal for God's people, or what specific behaviors does it challenge us to embrace? How do these words even point to the wisdom of Jesus' teaching?"
- **Prophets**
 - Examples – Major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel) and minor prophets (Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi)
 - Primary contribution: To exhort us about the rewards of covenant obedience and warn us of the discipline of disobedience under the old covenant so that we are challenged to maintain our heart for God and our just treatment of others as we live under the new covenant. Therefore, ask, "What does this passage tell us about Israel's behavior in her covenantal relationship with God and about God's response to His people, and those areas that we may also be susceptible to neglect within our new covenant relationship?"

- Secondary contribution: To give us glimpses into the immediate future of God’s people or into the distant future of the messianic/new covenant era and the superseding blessing of life in this climactic era. Therefore, ask, “What does this passage tell us about God’s plans for Israel (now past) or His plans for His new covenant people (now present and still future)? How do these passages point to Jesus?”
- Humans/prophets are the main speakers but God is the source of the prophets’ words
- Not just predictions. God’s spokespersons to his people. Enforced the covenants. God’s plan, power and purpose. The Messiah – need for a savior.
- **Gospels**
 - Examples – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
 - Primary contribution: To teach us about who Jesus the Messiah is and give us the opportunity to be disciples by Him as we observe Him and His disciples; also to observe Him modeling life in the kingdom of God and listen to Him about how we should live in the kingdom and be transformed in areas of sinful resistance. This is the story of the incarnate Christ. Therefore, ask, “What does this passage tell us about who Jesus is and about how I should respond to being His disciple? How then should I live as a citizen of the kingdom of God?”
 - Secondary contribution: To give insight into how we may encourage fellow disciples. Therefore, ask, “Are there certain principles or methods of ministry that Jesus is modeling as He ministers to His disciples or others that would be appropriate for us to imitate in our ministries?”
 - Stories of Jesus and teachings of Jesus, Good News, Victory over Sin, Kingdom (life under the lordship of Jesus that is both now and not yet)
- **The Acts of the Apostles**
 - Primary contribution: To teach us what God is doing in history at this present time under the kingship of Jesus the Messiah and to model for us what our corresponding purpose is as God’s new covenant people; it also explains our roots, as well as some of the fruits of our identity as the church as we fulfill our purpose in the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, ask, “What does this passage tell us about our purpose and focus as God’s people and how should I respond to being a part of the church and living as citizens in the kingdom of God?”
- **Epistles**
 - Examples of epistles – Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude
 - Primary contribution: To teach, exhort and model our identity as the church and how we are to live it in the community of God’s people by making godly choices in a myriad of practical areas in order to fulfill our purpose
 - Theology speaking to specific issues, instructions for the church, how to live this life on earth, how to continue to understand who Jesus is and what He has done
- **The Book of Revelation**
 - A prophetic account in letter form in apocalyptic terms
 - Primary contribution: To encourage and exhort us to overcome through continued faith and faithfulness in the difficult times by revealing God’s ultimate triumph over Satan in establishing Christ’s kingdom and the new heavens and new earth. Therefore, ask, “What insights into God’s ultimate triumph does this passage give us and how does it encourage us to live faithfully and courageously today in the face of opposition to and persecution of the church?”
 - Secondary contribution: To inform us of some of the specific events signaling the end of the age. Therefore, ask, “What can we learn about where God is going to take history and glorify Himself as we see what events he will sovereignly allow at the end of the age? How do we see Jesus continuing as the great victor over sin, death and the enemy?”
 - Hope for the future, judgment, instruction

[Content on the specific contributions of each genre of biblical literature comes from Talbot School of Theology professor Walt Russell’s book “Playing with Fire.”]

Conclusion:

Therefore, give Jesus the proper authority He deserves as you discover Him in the Bible. Give the Bible (God’s Word) the authority it deserves in the proper way it describes. The only way for the Bible to have authority in your life is if you read it.

Next Steps:

1. **READ IT!** Begin a plan to read your bible regularly. You can find several reading plans at bible.com/reading-plans or on the YouVersion app, available for download on your mobile device.
2. Read the book “How to Read the Bible for All It’s Worth” by Fee and Stuart. This book, as well as others on the topic, are available at The Corner Bookstore here at Calvary Church.
3. For women, attend the ‘Open Your Bible’ LifeGroup on Tuesdays at 9:00 am in Fellowship Hall, or Tuesdays at 7:00 pm in Fireside beginning on September 13. For more information about LifeGroups for women, visit calvarylife.org/women
4. Go to Israel with Calvary Church this February to help the Bible become more alive. Find out more at calvarylife.org/israel

LifeGroup Discussion:

1. Describe your experience with reading the Bible. Has it been difficult? Has it changed over time? Have you made mistakes along the way that you have learned from?
2. Describe where you stand on surrendering to the authority of Scripture. How has that stance changed throughout your life?
3. How has the understanding of the different genres affecting your view of the authority of Scripture? How has it affected your ability to understand the Bible better?