

Chapter One Workbook: The Views Of Scripture

Scripture Memory:

Revelation 22:18 & 19 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

The Views of Scripture

Introduction: The Attacks upon the Word of God over the last fifty years:

Each era of modern Christianity has seen an ever increasing attack upon the Word of God. This systematic attack on the authority of the Word can be broken down decade by decade. This of course is by no means an exhaustive look at these attacks. Historians may see these decades differently, but these attacks never-the-less did exist.

As you read the summation of each decade, record in the space provided what you feel to be...

1. The key sin at work in making this attack possible
2. The influence of this particular attack on the attitudes found in the church today.

A. The Attack of the 50's – The new era of enlightenment

1. During the post war era there was a feeling of invincibility, of enlightenment. Good had triumphed over evil, technology was going to solve the problems of the world.
2. The benefits of a Christian basis for actions and work was attributed to man, there was a feeling that a new dawn of mankind had come and technology would lead the way.
3. The Bible therefore was subjugated to this enlightenment. Mankind would do good and be good based on self-evident truths, rather than the Word of God. According to this world view science and technology, not God's Word, held the answers to man's problems.

State what you feel to be a sin at work in making this attack possible.

Next state the influence of this particular attack on the attitudes found in the church today.

How would those who advocate enlightenment through science and technology find the following passages offensive?

Rom 3:10-18

- 10 as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one;*
11 There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God;
12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one."
13 "Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving," "the poison of asps is under their lips";
14 "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness";
15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood,
16 Destruction and misery are in their paths,
17 And the path of peace have they not known."
18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Eccl 1:13-18

13 And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven. It is a grievous task which God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with.

14 I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind.

15 What is crooked cannot be straightened, and what is lacking cannot be counted.

16 I said to myself, "Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge."

17 And I set my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I realized that this also is striving after wind.

18 Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge results in increasing pain.

B. The Attack of the 60's – Unreliable Text

1. As the euphoria of the 50's began to wain and technology became suspect. The harm which science and technology brought about, the failure of technology to produce the answers it had promised, the illlusiveness of the utopian world technology promised, all these and more made people more and more skeptical of technologies ability to satisfy man's deepest needs. This however did not result in man turning to God's Word for the answers, rather, the attracts on the scripture became more direct.
2. The Word of God during this period was rejected out right because of supposed defects in the text.
3. As the authenticity of more and more secular documents of antiquity came into question and as conflicting manuscripts and archeological findings were unearthed, it became fashionable to lump the Holy scriptures into this same category. It was argued that over the ages the Bible had been changed, had evolved, just as other documents of antiquity.

State what you feel to be a sin at work in making this attack possible.

Next state the influence of this particular attack on the attitudes found in the church today.

How would those who advocate the unreliability Biblical text find the following passages offensive?

Ps 12:6-7 The words of the LORD are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times. Thou, O LORD, wilt keep them; Thou wilt preserve him from this generation forever.

2 Tim 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

1 Pet 1:24-25 For, "All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off, But the word of the Lord abides forever." And this is the word which was preached to you.

2 Pet 1:20-21 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

C. The Attack of the 70's – Evolution and Science

1. Despite the claim of corrupted texts, multiple authors and changes throughout the centuries archeology produced no proof of such alterations. Years passed, archeological digs increased, manuscripts were unearthed, but rather than discrediting the Scriptures, they instead validated the integrity of the Word of God. With the failure of archeology and research to provide any tangible proof of changes introduced into the Scriptures, the attack turned to Evolution and Science
2. The Word of God was to be rejected in that tangible proofs of the impossibility of miracles, particularly the creation account in Scripture. Evolution was held to be the only reasonable, scientific and rational explanation for the universe in general and life on earth in particular.
3. The Word of God was to be rejected due to the fact that the creation account defied reason.

State what you feel to be a sin at work in making this attack possible.

Next state the influence of this particular attack on the attitudes found in the church today.

How would those who advocate evolution as the explanation for life on earth find the following passages offensive?

Gen 1:1-2 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Gen 1:27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Gen 5:1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.

Ps 33:6-9

6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host.

7 He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

D. The Attack of the 80's – Hedonism

1. The pursuit of material goods replaced philosophical debate in the 80's.
2. Scientific evidence used to attack the Creation Account of Scriptures, if applied evenly also brought into question the tenants of evolution. Methodology of dating, the conceptions of time and space, the inability to reconcile the scientific dating of not only the earth but creation itself with the vast amounts of time needed for evolution, all these and more caused a general disillusionment with the ability for science to provide meaningful answers to the origin and purpose of man resulting in his turning instead to hedonism.
3. During this time of prosperity, the Word of God was rejected simply because it cramped the style of a hedonistic and materialistic society.

State what you feel to be a sin at work in making this attack possible

Next state the influence of this particular attack on the attitudes found in the church today.

How would those who advocate the pursuit of pleasure and prosperity find the following passages offensive?

Eccl 2:10-17

10 And all that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

11 Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.

12 So I turned to consider wisdom, madness and folly, for what will the man do who will come after the king except what has already been done?

13 And I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness.

14 The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I know that one fate befalls them both.

15 Then I said to myself, "As is the fate of the fool, it will also befall me. Why then have I been extremely wise?" So I said to myself, "This too is vanity."

16 For there is no lasting remembrance of the wise man as with the fool, inasmuch as in the coming days all will be forgotten. And how the wise man and the fool alike die!

17 So I hated life, for the work which had been done under the sun was grievous to me; because everything is futility and striving after wind.

Eph 5:11-12

11 And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.

James 4:1-4

1 What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?

2 You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

I John 2:15-17

15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

17 And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

E. The Attack of the 90's – Spiritism

1. The failure of science and technology to bring about a utopian society, the failure of the evolutionary models to give a rational and reasoned explanation for man's existence, the failure of the marketplace to sustain the hedonism of man and the failure of hedonism to produce any type of meaning to life, the acknowledgment of undisputed miracles in medicine, the dumbing down of society as a whole resulting in the open belief of UFOs, spirits and the occult all paved the way for the rejection of the Word of God based on spiritism.
2. The Word of God was seen as a dead and archaic document, while spiritism was alive and well. The Word of God was accepted only to the degree that it was subjected to spiritual or miraculous experiences.

State what you feel to be a sin at work in making this attack possible

Next state the influence of this particular attack on the attitudes found in the church today.

How would those who advocate spiritism, spiritualism and miracles apart from the defining confines of God's holy Word find the following passages offensive?

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.

Gal 1:8-9

8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

I John 4:1-3

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;

3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

F. The Attack of the 21 Century – Inclusion

1. By “Inclusion” we mean a universalist view of all religions, that all religions have equal worth and value.
2. For those who advocate inclusion , it is not that you are wrong – you may very well be right, but rather you are sophisticated enough to realize that they also may be right, if not in the whole, at least in part.
3. The assertion of those claiming not only to be a way, but the one and only way will be seen as arrogant, ignorant and abhorrent in an enlightened society. For Christians to make the claim that we are right and everyone else is not only wrong, but so wrong they are going to spend an eternity in Hell is unacceptable and perhaps dangerous to those who espouse this world view. The position of Christians that others are not simply deceived but rebellious and living out a lie of their own purposeful creation is equally offensive.
4. In short the attack o the 21st Century will be upon the exclusive claims of Christianity. These will be viewed as arrogant, ignorant, as religious prejudice and intolerance and even dangerous.
5. How would those who advocate the doctrines of inclusion find each of the following passages offensive?

a. John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.

b. Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

c. Romans 1:18-23 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

d. John 6:65 And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."

e. 1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

6. This new era of acceptance will say that the Word of God will be accepted but this acceptance must be broad enough to include other religions, other experiences and other views. The willingness to be reasonable, to compromise is the hallmark of inclusion.

As it pertains to "Inclusion", state what you feel to be a sin at work in making this attack possible

Next state the influence of this particular attack on the attitudes found in the church today.

Lastly, take a look at your own life and belief. Has the influence of "inclusion" affected you and your beliefs?

I. Views of Scripture – Each of the differing views below have a singular commonality, the acceptance, in one way or another of Extra- Biblical Revelation. By extra-Biblical Revelation we mean revelation that occurs outside the written Word of God as well as nay revelation that occurs after the Book of Revelation. In this atmosphere, the Word of God then becomes subservient to that new Revelation. In the world today, we are expected to believe the legitimacy of these new revelations or views. This is such a prevalent view that we should reflect on our own lives – "How has our view of scripture been impacted by these assaults made possible by the belief or acceptance of extra-Biblical Revelation?"

A. Cults – "The Word of God is understood and interpreted in the light of our new religion"

1. In the space below list religions or cults which accept Jesus and the Bible but subjugate them an inferior position in the place of this new religion.

2. Issues

- a. Read Deuteronomy 6:4 – what does this passage teach?
"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!"

1.) What type of idolatry is forbidden in Deuteronomy 6:12 – 16; 30:15 – 20

2.) Does spiritism necessarily have to exist outside the confines of Christianity? Can Christians be lead astray by deceiving spirits? Besides simply worshiping idols or another religion, what type of idolatry could be represented by spiritism? The passages below are addressed to Christians. How are Christians warned against spiritism in each one?

1 Timothy 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,
NASU

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.
NASU

1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
NASU

What are some ways that “spiritisms” makes inroads into Christianity? In answering this question consider the experiences below. How could satan or a demonic spirit manifest each one?

a.) Miracles –

b.) Spiritual Experiences –

c.) Spiritual appearances –

d.) Many say that if good results the miracle or spiritual event must be from God. How does Matthew 7:22 & 23 speak to this?

e.) All other religions outside of Christianity claim to accomplish good. All will make the claim that within their religions their are good people and good is accomplished. All will claim as well to have miracles which result in good. This is a common argument both within and without Christianity, if good results then it must be from God. yet this is not necessarily true. Good occurs because God is good, not man. Good occurs on earth despite man, not because of man. This principle is illustrated in the chart below. Read the passages and then complete the chart...

PASSAGE	MAN'S CLAIM	REALITY
<p><i>Matthew 5:45...for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.</i></p>	<p>Be it Hindu, Mormon, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness or another religion – "We prayed, it rained, therefore God is honoring our prayer."</p>	
<p><i>Matthew 7:22-23 Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS."</i></p>	<p>Be it Hindu, Mormon, Muslim or Jehovah's Witness – "We prayed, a miracle occurred, therefore God is honoring our prayer"</p>	

PASSAGE	MAN'S CLAIM	REALITY
<p><i>Genesis 1:28 & 9:7 God blessed them; and God said to them, " Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth...As for you, be fruitful and multiply; Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it."</i></p>	<p>Be it Hindu, Mormon, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness or any other cult or religion – "We prayed, our wives conceived, therefore God is honoring our prayer"</p>	
<p><i>Genesis 8:21-22 The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, And cold and heat, And summer and winter, And day and night Shall not cease."</i></p>	<p>Be it Hindu, Mormon, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness or any other cult or religion – "We pray, the seasons come and go, the harvest is gathered in, God is honoring our prayer"</p>	
<p><i>Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.</i></p>	<p>Be it Hindu, Mormon, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness or any other cult or religion – "We pray, God reveals Himself in nature, God is honoring our prayer"</p>	
<p><i>Matthew 4:9-10 and he said to Him, " All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me ." Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"</i></p>	<p>Be it Hindu, Mormon, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness or any other cult or religion – "We pray, God blesses us with material blessings and with power, God is honoring our prayer"</p>	

3.) Does idolatry always have to be praying to a statue or picture?

In Colossians 3:5 and Ephesians 5:5 what how is idolatry manifested?

Colossians 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Ephesians 5:5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

4.) We reject therefore any form of idolatry. It has no value or use in interpreting or understanding the Word of God. All other religions of the world are understood in the light of The Word of God and not vice versa. The explanation is clear - Acts 4:12 "***And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.***"

b. How does I Timothy 2:5 speak to the principle that other religions do not explain or interpret the Word of God?

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

1.) What does this say about all other religions?

2.) Apart from Christ can there be any mediator between God and man?

3.) Many teach that other religions came about by man's genuine desire to know God. Yet in seeking Him they went astray. As a result it is claimed there are noble aspects to all religions. Simply because they came to the wrong conclusion does not mean that they are inherently evil. The argument is then made that insights into God can be gleaned from a study of these other religions and these insights can be added to the understanding of God as gained from the Bible. How does Romans 1:18 – 23 speak to this theory?

c. According to the Word of God

1.) There is _____ God (Deuteronomy 6:4)

- 2.) There is _____ Mediator (Timothy 2:5)
 - 3.) There is _____ Name which gives salvation (Acts 4:12)
 - 4.) There is _____ Way, Truth and Life leading to God (John 14:6)
 - 5.) There is _____ Revelation (Revelation 22:18 & 19)
- d. Since earliest elementary school we have been taught about the “great religions” of the world. Their commonalities have been stressed to us. The importance of mutual acceptance has been stressed. We have been encourage to broadminded and this broadmindedness is often summed up in the phrase - “They have things we need, we have things they need”. An evolutionary model showing the common roots of all religions has been taught.
- 1.) What other misconceptions concerning the validity of other religions have you been taught?
 - 2.) Were you to accept these misconceptions how would this tend to affect your view of other religious writings?
 - 3.) Pause and reflect: Are there any changes you need to make in your view of other religions and their writings to bring yourself into line with the Word of God?

B. Apostolic/Patriarchal Christians – “The Word of God is understood and interpreted in light of continuing Apostolic authority and revelation.” This view of Scriptures accepts it’s validity and holy nature but views the authority to interpret and even to add to the Word of God as residing in the hands of those in authority in the church – be it a Pope, or Council of Bishops, or Apostle or Prophet, or some other spiritually gifted person or persons. The Word of God is indeed the Word of God but it is understood and interpreted in the light of continuing Apostolic, Church or Prophetic Revelation.

1. Example:
 - a. How does the position of the Roman Catholic Church on the authority of the Pope reflect this teaching?
 - b. How does the Anglican Communion’s view of the authority of the Council of Bishops reflect this view?

- c. How does the Orthodox church's view of the authority of Church Councils reflect this view?
- d. How does the Pentecostal/Charismatic church's view of gifts such as Prophecy, Word of Wisdom/Knowledge; Tongues and their interpretation reflect this view?
- e. Evangelical Extra-biblical Revelation – The Evangelical Protestant Church is not free from these misconceptions. In many churches, after death experiences; visions; messianic appearances; messages from God and other forms of extra-Biblical Revelation are taught and freely shared.
- 1.) Just as the Pentecostals and Charismatic, laugh at Papal decrees while they themselves practice a form of this through their so called apostles, prophets and revelatory gifts - so evangelical Christians laugh at the Pentecostal revelatory gifts while at the same time accepting extra-biblical revelation through experiences.
 - 2.) We therefore reject any experience which gives us new information not found in the Bible. How would the following constitute extra-biblical revelation? In other words, if a person truly had this experience, what spiritual information would he now have that those who rely solely upon the Bible would be denied?
 - a.) Appearances by Jesus
 - b.) Appearances by angels or demons
 - c.) Experiences which take us to heaven or hell
 - d.) Visions which give us information not found in the Bible
 - e.) A Word of Knowledge, a Word of Wisdom, a Prophecy or Tongue which gives spiritual information not found in the Word of God.
 - f.) Any spiritual information which begins, "I have a word from God for you..." or "Thus says the Lord...".
 - g.) Since the above information is spiritual, it is from God, it is helpful to Christians yet not found in the Bible, what should be the application of the church if these experiences are truly from God and revelatory in nature?

2. Issues:

In the project below, read the statement, next read the proof text, lastly, write a summation of how the proof text establishes the validity of the statement.

The Statement	The Proof Text	Your Summation
We reject any new information – that which either adds to or takes away from the Word of God.	Revelation 22:18 & 19; II Corinthians 11:13 – 15; Galatians 1:8	
We reject any teaching or experience which causes those who rely solely upon the Word of God to have incomplete information.	Deuteronomy 29:29; 30:11 – 14; II Timothy 3:16 & 17; Titus 2:1	
We reject that which is defined by the Bible as revelatory knowledge or revelatory experience.	II Peter 1:20,21; Revelation 1:9 – 12; 22:18 & 19	
We reject all mediators other than Christ	John 14:6; I Timothy 2:5	
We reject all mediators or revelation gained from so called apparitions of the dead.	Hebrews 9:27; Luke 16:26; II Corinthians 11:14	

Reflect for a moment: Are there any forms or types of extra-biblical revelation which you may have come to accept based on their miraculous nature without really thinking through on the implications in terms of extra-Biblical Revelation?

What are the long term implications of the practice by the Church of accepting extra-Biblical Revelation?

C. Red Letter Evangelicals – “The Word of God is understood and interpreted by the Words of Christ”

1. “Red Letter Evangelicals” place the words of Christ above those of the other writings in the scripture. This presupposes and unbiblical emphasis on the will and intentions of man when writing the inspired Word of God. For Red Letter Evangelicals, Christ’s words are taken over those of Moses, Paul, or Peter or for that matter all of

the other writings of the Bible. This approach to the Word of God is unsustainable and void of application. There are a number of reasons for this.

First: Jesus did not actually write down any of His sayings. They are recorded by the authors of the gospels. If the writings of Paul are subject to Christ (which are non-existent), then surely the writings of Luke are subject to Paul, as Paul was the Apostle and Luke simply his attending physician and traveling companion.

Second: The Word of God makes its claim of authority not by virtue of the oversight of Christ but rather that of the Holy Spirit.

Third: Man then is put in the position of pitting the members of the Trinity, one against the other in terms of teaching content and authority.

Fourth: We must then assign colors to the other members of the Trinity. God the Father – Purple; God the Son – Red and God the Holy Spirit – Green. The problem being, that since the entire Bible is inspired by God the Holy Spirit then all the lettering would be Green.

The issue then is not, “What does God the Father say on this issue”; Nor, “What does God the Son say on this issue?”; Nor “What does God the Holy Spirit say on this issue?”; But rather, “hat does the Bible say on this issue when it is considered from cover to cover?”.

2. Issues:

In the project below, read the statement, next read the proof text, lastly, state how the statement is established by the proof text.

The Statement	The Proof Text	Your Summation
The Word of God is the work of God the Holy Spirit	I Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20 & 21	
God is One – God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are inseparable one from the other.	Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; Ephesians 4:4 - 6	
Jesus Christ does not work independently from or in contradiction of The Father and The Spirit	John 10:30; 12:44 & 45; 14:8 & 9; Colossians 2:9;	
What Jesus said and did is synonymous with what God says and does. The question then is not limited to Jesus said but what is God revealing through the Word of God.	Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29; John 5:17; 8:19, 38; 10:30 & 37; 12:44 & 45; 14:7 – 9, 20; 15:23 & 24; 17:22; Colossians 2:9;	
Not everything Jesus said, taught or did is recorded in the Bible, but everything God wants us to know is recorded	John 21:24 & 25; Deuteronomy 29:29; 30:11 – 14; John 20:30;	

- a. Not everything that Jesus addressed in His earthly career is recorded in Scripture. As a result we look not to the teachings of Jesus as the final authority in all matters but to the Word of God in its entirety. Jesus' teachings on a number of subjects which face the church are not recorded in Scripture. These include but are not limited to
 - a. Homosexuality
 - b. Women leadership in the church
 - c. Drunkenness
 - d. Elder and Deacon rule within the church
 - e. Homosexuality
 - f. Since Jesus is silent on these issues are we free to say, "Since Jesus did not take a stand on these issues in His ministry, then neither should we."

- g. How would the statement, "Christ was silent", bring into question the clarity with which the Word of God speaks to these and other issues.

D. Evangelical Pragmatism – "The Word of God is understood and interpreted by what works" Evangelical Pragmatism works on two levels. First it attempts to avoid or defer all passages of Scriptures which the culture finds offensive. This is done so as not to offend "seekers" and cause them to turn away before they have had a chance to receive Christ. Second, Evangelical Pragmatism seeks to promote those passages or topics of Scripture which the culture will embrace. It seeks to address felt needs without offending or causing the listener to turn away. Although the motives of Evangelical Pragmatists may be noble the result is that they find themselves with a church full of people who simply will not listen to the difficult passages of Scriptures. Not only that but those who initially made the decision to de-emphasize certain teachings in the Word of God now find that they are saddled with a document with not just a few offensive passages but, instead it is full of such passages and issues. Thus the ministers and church leadership become fearful of the impact of the Word of God on church membership. Most leaders feel bad about this but their response can be summed up as, "I know the Bible teaches this and it used to work, we hope that some day in the future it works again, but right now it is just not pragmatic."

- 1. Examples: Modern "Seeker Churches" and the para-church movements.
 - a. The reality of a changing culture couples with the pressure to compete with large churches and Christian organizations often brings with it the following statement - "I know what the Bible says but the reality is if we do it that way we will be a small player in the modern church movement and needlessly marginalize ourselves over a non-issue." In other words certain passages of Scripture are simply too controversial and their application too difficult to be taught and so they are ignored. If the Bible is a self-help book and sermons are built around self-

help topics, then those passages and topics which are not helpful are to be avoided.

- b. Verses in the Word of God dealing with such issues as women in leadership, divorce and remarriage, spanking, the doctrine of election, Hell, the exclusiveness of Christ, are recognized as inspired and inerrant but simply do not work in the setting of the modern mega church or large Christian corporation. As such certain passages simply no longer make sense to the evangelical pragmatist. “If we do this then we cannot maintain our growth, so it must not mean what it says, perhaps someday we will know what it means”
- c. The evangelical pragmatist readily recognizes the variance of his ministry from certain passages in the Word of God. He feels bad about this but recognizes equally that they no longer work. They might have worked in the past, they may work again, but they do not work now. In his Bible studies the central question, “What does the God say in this verse?” is now replaced by “What does this verse mean to you?” Since all is filtered through the grid of numerical growth, certain verse simply cannot mean what they seem to be saying and are therefore, no matter how clearly stated, relegated to the obscure, that class of verses which simply do not make sense. “Someday, when we get to heaven, we will know.”
- d. Evangelical pragmatists embrace the self-help paradigm of our culture. The Word of God is evaluated on the basis of how “helpful” it is to the individual or ministry. This is what is authentic, what is relevant – that which sparks growth in the church or organization. Thus, to the Evangelical Pragmatist many passages which are difficult, which are not “productive” or “helpful” simply cease to have meaning. These passages are no longer authoritative and will be skipped over. They are “problem” passages which just cause difficulties and are best avoided.
- e. Recently, an international leader of a large para-church group stated to his staff, “Nearly all doctrinal disagreements are in reality personality conflicts.” This reduction of truth to personality cult is essential for the evangelical pragmatist. This is an excellent example of Evangelical Pragmatism, that all Biblical truth which produces conflicts should be avoided.

2. Issues

How do the following verses bring into question Evangelical Pragmatism?

- a. Definition of success – Matthew 7:13; John 6:66
- b. Definition of disciple – John 8:31
- c. Definition of the Word of God – II Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12
- d. The worlds reaction to the Word of God – II Timothy 4:3 & 4
- e. How will we as a church respond if the truth results in shrinking membership roles?

- f. Why is it that we idolize heroes in the Bible or the past whose stand for truth that resulted in persecution, deprivation and a shrinking following, but tend to fire our church leadership when the same thing happens in our local congregation?

E. **Evangelical Mysticism** – “The Word of God is understood and interpreted by my own spiritual experience(s).” Similar to Evangelical Pragmatism in its application Evangelical mysticism subjugates and interprets the Word of God to personal spiritual or mystical experiences. While the Word of God is seen as complicated, often difficult to understand and cumbersome and time consuming to study, personal experience seems clear and to the point. The Evangelical Mystic makes the presumption that on his value system and perceptiveness that he can determine the origin and meaning of mystical and spiritual events apart from the intense scrutiny of the Word of God. If he feels good has occurred, then good has occurred, if he feels God is at work, then God is at work, if he is convinced on the meaning of the sign, then it stops there. For the Evangelical Mystic, if the doctrines of the Word of God collide with his own dynamic mystical or spiritual experience then the Word of God is understood and interpreted by that experience and not vice versa.

1. Examples

- a. The Catholic, Charismatic and Pentecostal churches are prime examples of this movement.
 - 1.) Doctrines are openly taught and propagated based on ones own spiritual experience. The personal testimony, not the Biblical education is everything in these movements. Doctrinal, theological Biblical training springs from experience. The miraculous interprets the Word of God and not vice versa. If it is spiritual, if it is mystical, if good occurs, if it is miraculous, if it results in spiritual power and numerical growth, then it is from God. Dreams, visions, angelic appearances, apparitions, ministries of demonic deliverance, after death experiences, gifts entailing extra-biblical revelation and more are substantiated based on personal experience.
 - 2.) Seemingly good results are enough to justify virtually any experience, no matter how far it deviates from the revealed Word of God.
- b. When confronted with the Word of God the reply is, “I do not know the Bible as well as you, I can’t quote all the verses you can quote, you can talk me into a doctrinal corner, but I do know what I experienced and you can’t take that away from me.”
 - 1.) The mantra of Evangelical Mysticism is: “I don’t know what the Bible says, but I know what I experienced”
 - 2.) This is contrasted with the actual truth: “I don’t know what the Bible says so I don’t know what I have experienced.”
- c. The truth is that if you do not know what the Word of God says, if you cannot quote the verses, if you do not know the doctrinal and Biblical foundations, then you have no idea what you have experienced.
- d. While the Evangelical Pragmatist boasts – “You can’t argue with results”, the Evangelical Mystic proclaims – “You can’t argue with my experience”.
- e. It is an irony of the church that the Catholic and Pentecostal Church are

diametrically opposed one to the other in their core beliefs concerning the Bible, Jesus Christ, Salvation and the nature of God, yet both embrace almost identical mystical and spiritual experiences to substantiate their claims.

2. Issues

In the project below, read the statement, next read the proof text, lastly, state how the statement is established by the proof text.

The Statement	The Proof Text	Your Summation
The period of Revelation has closed.	Revelation 22:18 & 19	
Faith in the Word of God, not in visual experiences dictates what we believe.	II Corinthians 5:7	
Seemingly “Good Miracles” are determined by the Word of God, not by the temporal outcome of our experience or observations.	Exodus 7:8 – 12; Matthew 7:22 & 23; II Thessalonians 2:9	
The Word of God judges all experiences, our experience does not judge the Word of God.	Hebrews 4:12; John 12:48;	
Man is susceptible to deception and is just not spiritual enough to understand spiritual events apart from the Word of God.	Matthew 7:22 & 23; I Corinthians 13:12; II Thessalonians 2:8 & 9; I John 4:1; Revelation 12:9; 13:14	
For this reason Jesus rebukes all those who seek signs and wonders and instead commends them to the Word of God.	Matthew 12:38 – 40; (Psalm 106:12 – 14; Ecclesiastes 5:3 & 7; Luke 1:18 – 20; I Corinthians 1:21 - 23); Matthew 16:1 – 4; Mark 8:12; Luke 11: 16 & 29; John 20:30 & 31;	

- a. Do you really believe that the Word of God carries more authority than experience? Write a brief answer to each of the following...
 - 1.) If the Bible says “No” and you or someone experiences “Yes” will you continue to believe and conform to the Bible?
 - 2.) If the Bible says “Yes” and you or someone you know experiences “No” will you continue to believe and conform to the Bible?
 - 3.) If you have the Bible and someone else has a spiritual experiences and

miracles, who will you most likely believe?

- 4.) If you had the chance to go to a church where the Bible is being taught or go to a church where miracles are being performed, which would you choose?

F. Classic Evangelical Reformation Theology – “The Word of God is understood and interpreted and interpreted by the Word of God.”

There is a period in the life of the church known as the Dark Ages. During this time the Word of God was relegated to a second class position. Pagan Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle were elevated and revered within the church. Some went so far to claim they had a special grace or standing with God. The rule of the church was seen as a continuation of the rule of the Apostles – the Pope, the councils of Bishops and “Church Fathers” were revered, studied and their teachings and rulings were elevated to the position of Scripture within the church. During this time the Gospels and teachings of Jesus were elevated above the rest of the Holy Scripture and many errors came about in terms of monastic lifestyle, celibacy and a misplaced emphasis on asceticism, harsh treatment of the body and salvation through works. A pragmatic alliance emerged between the church and state as leadership in the church turned a blind eye to these and other abuses in exchange for growth and prosperity. Mysticism abounded, apparitions, appearances of the dead relatives of Jesus, magic objects purported to be associated with Jesus and the Apostles were everywhere for sale, angels and demons were seen around every dark corner and the church drifted into dark period of mysticism and spiritualism. It was during this period that God raised up a group of men who sought to reform the church and bring her back to a sole dependence upon the Word of God. These men, at the expense of liberty, of home and by the thousands, of life itself brought the Word of God back as the single authority of the church. Those teachings which are Scriptural and indicative of God’s plan for the church and for the Christians who make up Christ’s Church here on earth. This is what is known as Reformation Theology. These were the Reformers and they were derisively known as Protestants, or Protestors, for they opposed the subjection of the Word of God to other religions, to Apostolic Authority, to a misplaced emphasis on the Gospels at the expense of the entire Word of God, of Pragmatism and Mysticism and instead sought to return the Church to its original purity in its sole dependence upon the holy, eternal, inerrant, written Word of God. Yet today many of the truths reclaimed by the blood of countless Protestant Reformers is being willingly surrendered. We can once again see the danger of the church slipping into a second Dark Age. It is the responsibility of every Christian to take a stand in the preservation of the authority of the holy, eternal, inerrant, written Word of God.

In the project below, read the statement, next read the proof text, lastly, state how the statement is established by the proof text.

1. The Word of God is the sole divine revelation of God for the Church
Revelation 22:18 & 19

I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

2. The Word of God is by its very nature eternal and since it is protected and passed down to us by God, it can be trusted and applied without questions.

1 Peter 1:22-25

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. For, "ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you.

John 10:35

...and the Scripture cannot be broken...

3. The authority of the Word of God is based upon its divine revelation and inspiration of the Holy Spirit and not upon man –

II Peter 1:21

for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

4. All aspects of the Word of God are equally authoritative –

II Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

5. As a result the Word of God is perfect and without error

Psalms 19:7

The law of the LORD is perfect...

James 1:23-25

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

6. We do not judge the Word of God, it judges us. –

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

7. We do not manipulate the Word of God -
II Corinthians 4:2

but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

II. Application

- A. In discussing an issue with any of the above groups, it is important to understand that the root issue in all the errors discussed in this chapter is ones view of the Word of God. This means that unless you first agree upon the divine nature of the inspiration, preservation, authority and sufficiency of the Word of God that there can be no agreement upon the most basic doctrines of the faith. The most basic Scriptural beliefs concerning the nature of God, the sufficiency of Christ, the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit are all predicated upon a unanimity of conviction concerning the divine inspiration, preservation, authority and sufficiency of the Word of God. When grappling with any issue, you must first make sure you are truly going back to the Word of God.
- B. The difference between evangelical reformation doctrine and these previously discussed groups is not simply one of worship style or personality.
1. The explanation for divisions within the world concerning Christ and the Word of God is not simply that broad minded intellectuals are drawn to the benefits of other religions, it is not simply that Catholics enjoy a more formal worship style, while the Charismatics are more gregarious and outgoing. You cannot explain away the differences of these and other groups who have relegated the Word of God to a second class position by merely pointing out that they seem to attract certain personality groups. This view is condescending to the teachings of these groups and insulting to the authority of the Word of God by which they will be judged.
 2. The issues here strike at the heart of the doctrine of the Word of God. The view that the bread and wine literally becomes the body and blood of Christ is not a personality issue. The view that the Trinity does not exist is not a personality issue. The ordination of homosexuals is not a personality issue. The belief in baptismal regeneration – the saving power of baptism, is not a personality issue. These are just a few of the issues which separate Reformation Theology from those who have chosen to subject the Word of God to their movement in one way or another.
 3. The answer to the questions, “Why can’t we all just get along” is, “Because we cannot compromise on the most fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith as declared by the Word of God simply for the sake of all getting along”
 4. The Bible knows of no unity at the expense of the Word of God.
- C. Understanding what the Bible “Is not”, can be as important as understanding what the Bible “Is”.
1. The Bible is not a revelation of past cosmic/spiritual breakthroughs in order to help us recognize similar breakthroughs in our present day.
 2. The Bible is not a revelation of what God did in one culture or age to be used as a reference manual as we decide what is revolving in our age and culture.

3. The Bible is not a stage in God's evolutionary relationship with man, to help us understand the next stage of this progressive understanding as we continue to evolve and grow in our understanding of who and what God is.
 4. The Bible is not a glimpse into the past relationships of man with God that we might anticipate and understand future relationships, revelations, writings and mystical events.
 5. The Bible is not a starting point for man, a spring board so to speak, from which we develop our own understanding of who God is and what He does through self revelation and mystical encounters.
 6. The Bible is not a revelation of what God did or has done, that we might imagine what He is doing or will do.
 7. The Bible, is the Revelation of God, it is the Word of God, it is to be submitted to by man, it evaluates mankind, not vice versa. All that is needed is revealed, all that is hidden is done so purposefully by God.
- D. If the Word of God is understood and interpreted by the Word of God, then a thorough grasp of the entire revelation of God is essential.
1. This moves a daily reading of the Word of God where by the entire Bible is read through on a minimum of one time each year a priority.
 2. The computer and or concordance is no substitute for the personal reading of the Word of God.
 - a. The ability to use a spell check, does not mean you know or understand the principles of language, spelling and usage.
 - b. The ability to use a calculator does not mean you know or understand the principles of mathematics.
 - c. The ability to read phonetically does not mean you know or understand the words you are reading.
 - d. The ability to find words using a concordance or computer does not mean you know or understand the words you are teaching.

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD*JEREMIAH 15:16***THEME: The Word of God****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Revelation 22:18 & 19; Galatians 1:6 - 8****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?
Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Deuteronomy 29:29: 30:11 – 14; I Corinthians 2:10;
I John 2:27****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?
Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: II Timothy 3:16: I Peter 1:23 – 25; I Thessalonians 2:13****How does this passage relate to the theme?****When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?
Explain why:****How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD*JEREMIAH 15:16***THEME: The Word of God**

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Hebrews 4:12; John 17:17; Ephesians 6:17;
Psalm 19:7 & 8

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?
Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: James 1:22 – 25; 3:17

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?
Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: II Peter 1:20 & 21; Galatians 1:11 & 12

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?
Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?