



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

**An Introduction to Lutheran Doctrine
and the Church of the Lutheran Confession
Lesson 2 – Our Source of Truth**

II. Our Source of True

In our teaching and preaching we rely entirely upon the Bible, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. We regard the Bible as the very Word of God, verbally inspired (every word “God-breathed”) and completely without error. Our mission is to faithfully communicate the words and message of the Bible. There is no other divine source of true doctrine and instruction in the way of salvation and in God-pleasing living.

We reject as ungodly and destructive every effort by which some would change, add to, or set aside a single inspired word of the Bible. God’s Word is clear and sufficient in all matters of faith and life. We deplore the widespread unfaithfulness – found even in some professing Christian churches – that reduces the Bible to a human document containing errors and myths.

2 Timothy 3:16-17: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

John 10:35: ... and the Scripture cannot be broken.

Luke 21:33: Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Jeremiah 23:18: The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream; and he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? Says the LORD.

Psalms 119:105: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Comments:

The purpose of the CLC is to preach the Gospel – the Good News of Jesus Christ. But where can we find this Gospel that we are to teach? Jesus Himself has directed us to a source that is altogether authentic and absolute. In His debates with the Jewish leaders Jesus always appealed to the Scriptures, which at Jesus time would have been the 39 books of the Old Testament. In one of these debates Jesus quoted a verse from a psalm and then said: **“And the Scripture cannot be broken.”** That is to say: It stands written in the Bible, and nothing can change it and no one should dare to argue against it. The Old Testament is the Word of God. That is why it cannot be broken.

According to Jeremiah 23:18, there is a big difference between God’s Word and the dreams and thoughts of men. God’s Word is wheat, but man’s word is chaff. Because Scripture is God’s Word, it is necessary for a Christian church body to speak God’s Word faithfully, to teach it as it is, without changing it in any way – neither adding to it or subtracting from it.

The Old Testament was written before Jesus came into the world. Nevertheless, the Old Testament is a book about Jesus. In John 5:39 Jesus says that the Old Testament Scriptures **“testify of Me.”** In fact, Jesus in John 5:46 says that Moses **“wrote about Me.”** Thus, the Old Testament Scriptures are Christ-centered. After Jesus rose from the dead, He told His followers: **“All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me”** (Luke 24:44).

When Jesus came into the world, He used the Old Testament as a source of His teaching. As the Son of God, Jesus Himself also spoke the Word of God Himself, and He wanted His own words and teachings to be preserved in writing. Therefore, even though Jesus Himself wrote nothing, we still have His exact words. He told His disciples: **“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you”** (John 14:26). Jesus said to them: **“When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you”** (John 16:13-14).

Because Jesus promised them the Holy Spirit, we can be sure the New Testament, written by Jesus’ apostles and their associates, is the Holy Spirit’s Book of truth, just as the Old Testament is the Holy Spirit’s Book of truth. Therefore, the words of Paul to Timothy are true of both the Old Testament and the New Testament: **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”** (2 Timothy 3:16). Literally, this verse says that all Scripture is “breathed out” by God. The sacred words given by the Holy Spirit to the prophets and apostles are in fact the actual Words of God. As the Word of God, the Bible is useful for doctrine, that is, for knowing all spiritual truth. It is also useful for determining the difference between truth and error, and between right and wrong – the Bible is useful for reproof and correction and for instruction in righteousness. The Bible gives us Christians all that we need to know for our lives as Christians; it makes us **“complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** It is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path. Even though the world will one day pass away, God’s Word is eternal and will never pass away, as Jesus Himself said in Luke 21:33.

Questions

1. What do we mean when we speak of the Bible or Holy Scriptures?
2. What is the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament?
3. What is the difference between the Bible and all other writings?
4. What is meant by the term “inspiration”?
5. What is the main theme of the entire Bible?
6. Why can we be sure that the Bible contains no errors?
7. What did Jesus promise to His disciples in chapters 14-16 of John’s Gospel?
8. Why can we say that God’s Word is now complete and nothing will be added?