

## A Quiz on the Doctrine of Scripture

God has spoken and God speaks. God has spoken and continues to speak through the Holy Scriptures, the Bible. How well do you know the doctrine of the Scripture? How well do you know what the Bible tells us about the Bible? This short thirty-three question quiz is designed to help you find out. Read each question carefully and circle your answer.

1. It is appropriate to say that God is the author of the Bible.  
True      False
2. Because God is the author of the Bible, it is not appropriate to say that the books in the Bible have human authors.  
True      False
3. Inspiration means that God dictated the words of the Bible to human beings who then wrote them down.  
True      False
4. The ultimate reason that Scripture is authoritative is because God is its author.  
True      False
5. The inspiration of Scripture was the particular work of God the Father.  
True      False
6. To disobey the Scripture is to disobey God.  
True      False
7. To disbelieve Scripture is to disbelieve God.  
True      False
8. God communicated the words of the Bible to human authors without error.  
True      False
9. Textual criticism is a field of study committed to undermining the truthfulness and authority of the Bible.  
True      False
10. The word "autographs" refers to the original manuscripts or documents on which the Bible was written.  
True      False
11. While it is true that the Bible is without error, the doctrine of inerrancy strictly applies only to the original manuscripts.  
True      False
12. Since there are copying errors in every manuscript, affirming the inerrancy of the original text is a pointless exercise.  
True      False
13. The words in Scripture that were actually spoken by Jesus (i.e. the "red letters") carry more authority than the other words of Scripture.  
True      False
14. The word used to describe the complete list of all the books that belong in the Bible is "covenant."  
True      False
15. There are 64 books in the canon of Scripture.  
True      False
16. The books in the Bible became authoritative when they were included in the official canon of Scripture.  
True      False
17. The church stands under the authority of Scripture and its teachings are to be judged by Scripture.  
True      False
18. Scripture tells me everything I need to know to be saved.  
True      False
19. Scripture tells me everything I need to know to live a life pleasing to God.  
True      False

20. Scripture tells me everything I will ever want or need to know.  
True      False
21. Everything God requires of us as Christians is included in Scripture either explicitly or by implication.  
True      False
22. The term “perspicuity of Scripture” can be defined as “Through the Bible the Holy Spirit is able to persuade people to become Christians.”  
True      False
23. Scripture is clear enough that ordinary people who study it and seek God’s help to understand it will learn what they need to know, believe, and do to please God.  
True      False
24. Every passage in Scripture is easy to understand perfectly.  
True      False
25. Scripture is the one and only means God uses to communicate truth about himself.  
True      False
26. The revelation of Scripture is necessary for us to know the good news of salvation.  
True      False
27. The New Testament corrects the Old Testament.  
True      False
28. One passage of Scripture will never actually contradict another.  
True      False
29. We should interpret the less clear passages of Scripture in light of its clearer passages.  
True      False
30. Persuading people that the Bible’s message is completely true and authoritative is the particular work of God the Son.  
True      False
31. The ultimate focus of the Bible is Christians.  
True      False
32. God gave us the Bible so that we might come to know him through faith in Jesus Christ.  
True      False
33. It is possible that God will speak again and add new books to the Bible.  
True      False

“ *The Bible is an armory of heavenly weapons, a laboratory of infallible medicines, a mine of exhaustless wealth. It is a guidebook for every road, a chart for every sea, a medicine for every malady, and a balm for every wound. Rob us of our Bible and our sky has lost its sun.*

—Thomas Guthrie

## Answers & Explanations

1. It is appropriate to say that God is the author of the Bible.  
True. Paul writes that “all Scripture is breathed out by God” (2 Timothy 3:16). Scripture, then, is God speaking God’s words. It is appropriate to consider God the author of Scripture.
2. Because God is the author of the Bible, it is not appropriate to say that the books in the Bible have human authors.  
False. In 2 Peter 1:21 it also says that “men spoke” the words of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21). The Holy Spirit governed the writing of the text, but the words were written down by human beings. For that reason it is perfectly appropriate to speak of humans as being the authors of Scripture.
3. Inspiration means that God dictated the words of the Bible to human beings who then wrote them down.  
False. The Holy Spirit governed the writing of the text, but used the skills, vocabulary, research, and personality of the human authors. Scripture, then, is recorded in the words its human authors used, and at the same time, the words are the exact words God wanted them to write.
4. The ultimate reason that Scripture is authoritative is because God is its author.  
True. The men who wrote the books of the Bible were speaking from God (2 Peter 1:21). Scripture, then, is God speaking and we are subject to Scripture’s authority because we are subject to God’s authority.
5. The inspiration of Scripture was the particular work of God the Father.  
False. “Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21). Thus, the inspiration of Scripture was the particular work of the Holy Spirit.
6. To disobey the Scripture is to disobey God.  
True. When we obey Scripture, we are obeying God himself because Scripture is God speaking. When we disobey Scripture, we are disobeying God himself.
7. To disbelieve Scripture is to disbelieve God.  
True. To not believe what Scripture says is to not believe what God says (1 Thessalonians 4:8).
8. God communicated the words of the Bible to human authors without error.  
True. What Scripture says is what God says, and God does not lie or make mistakes (Hebrews 6:18; Titus 1:2).
9. Textual criticism is a field of study committed to undermining the truthfulness and authority of the Bible.  
False. Textual criticism is simply “a method used to determine what the original manuscripts of the Bible said.” Though some scholars use it to undermine the Bible, many others use it to encourage our confidence in the Bible. (GotQuestions.org)
10. The word “autographs” refers to the original manuscripts or documents on which the Bible was written.  
True. The original documents or manuscripts (such as the letter to the Romans that Paul dictated to Tertius and then entrusted to Phoebe to deliver to the church) are called “autographs.” Today none of the original autographs remain.
11. While it is true that the Bible is without error, the doctrine of inerrancy strictly applies only to the original manuscripts.  
True. We know that the God who doesn’t lie or make mistakes breathed out what the authors actually wrote, so the autographs are without error. But we also know there are some copying errors in every Hebrew and Greek manuscript that we have. Wayne Grudem defines inerrancy in this way: “Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.”
12. Since there are copying errors in every manuscript, affirming the inerrancy of the original text is a pointless exercise.  
False. With the many manuscripts we have, textual scholars can reconstruct the original wording of the Bible with great accuracy. We can be confident that the Bible we hold in our hands is true and accurate.

13. The words in Scripture that were actually spoken by Jesus (i.e. the “red letters”) carry more authority than the other words of Scripture.  
False. Since all of Scripture is God speaking, all of Scripture has ultimate authority. The words of Jesus carry no more authority than the rest because God spoke it all.
14. The word used to describe the complete list of all the books that belong in the Bible is “covenant.”  
False. The word used to describe the complete list of all the books that belong in the Bible is “canon.” Wayne Grudem writes, “The canon of Scripture is the list of all the books that belong in the Bible.”
15. There are 64 books in the canon of Scripture.  
False. There are 66 books in the canon of Scripture.
16. The books in the Bible became authoritative when they were included in the official canon of Scripture.  
False. Because they are inspired by God, the books in the Bible have inherent authority. They were authoritative as they were written. The canon of Scripture—the list of inspired books—does not give them authority, but recognizes their inherent authority.
17. The church stands under the authority of Scripture and its teachings are to be judged by Scripture.  
True. The church is ruled by God, so it is ruled by God’s words in Scripture. “The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture” (Westminster Confession of Faith 1.10).
18. Scripture tells me everything I need to know to be saved.  
True. Scripture is “able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:14-17).
19. Scripture tells me everything I need to know to live a life pleasing to God.  
True. Scripture equips people “for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:14-17).
20. Scripture tells me everything I will ever want or need to know.  
False. There are many things you may need to know that Scripture doesn’t address at all, like how to drive a car, or how to cook a meal.
21. Everything God requires of us as Christians is included in Scripture either explicitly or by implication.  
True. “The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man’s salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture” (WCF 1.6). See also 2 Timothy 3:14-17.
22. The term “perspicuity of Scripture” can be defined as “Through the Bible the Holy Spirit is able to persuade people to become Christians.”  
False. Perspicuity is a term that refers to the Bible’s clarity.
23. Scripture is clear enough that ordinary people who study it and seek God’s help to understand it will learn what they need to know, believe, and do to please God.  
True. Scripture is able to make simple people wise (Psalm 19:7; 119:130) and equip them for “every good work” (2 Timothy 3:14-17). See also 2 Timothy 2:7.
24. Every passage in Scripture is easy to understand perfectly.  
False. Even Peter had to admit that some things in Paul’s epistle “are hard to understand” (2 Peter 3:16).
25. Scripture is the one and only means God uses to communicate truth about himself.  
False. God shows himself “in the things that have been made” (Romans 1:19-21). The existence of God and something of his nature is revealed to humankind through the witness of creation (Psalm 19:1).
26. The revelation of Scripture is necessary for us to know the good news of salvation.  
True. Salvation depends on knowledge of Christ (Romans 10:13-17), and true knowledge of Christ comes ultimately from Scripture.

27. **The New Testament corrects the Old Testament.**  
False. Since God is the ultimate source of all Scripture, it is a unified whole. The New Testament expands on and explains the Old Testament, but never corrects it.
28. **One passage of Scripture will never actually contradict another.**  
True. The teaching of the Bible is self-consistent because it all comes from the unchanging God who cannot lie, so no passage of Scripture ever contradicts another passage of Scripture. While it might seem like two passages contradict each other, we should press on to understand each passage truly.
29. **We should interpret the less clear passages of Scripture in light of its clearer passages.**  
True. This principle is known as the analogy of Scripture. It is one implication of the self-consistency of Scripture.
30. **Persuading people that the Bible's message is completely true and authoritative is the particular work of God the Son.**  
False. This is the particular work of the Holy Spirit. "Our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts" (WCF 1.5). See also 1 Corinthians 2:9-16.
31. **The ultimate focus of the Bible is Christians.**  
False. The ultimate focus of the Bible is the person and work of Jesus. Jesus Himself says so in John 5:39 and Luke 24:25-27.
32. **God gave us the Bible so that we might come to know him through faith in Jesus Christ.**  
True. Paul and John affirm this purpose in 2 Timothy 3:15 and John 20:31.
33. **It is possible that God will speak again and add new books to the Bible.**  
False. The Bible is God's full and final revelation. Hebrews 1:1-2 tell us that in the former days God spoke through prophets, but that "in these last days" he has spoken through his Son. God's speech through Christ, recorded as the New Testament, is his full and final revelation for this period in redemptive history.

## Recommended Resources

- *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* by Robert L. Plummer
- *Taking God at His Word* by Kevin DeYoung
- *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem
- The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy
- Westminster Confession of Faith

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