

GOD'S WORD--WHOLE AND UNABRIDGED

I. Acts 20:17-32

A. Our text begins with Paul on his third missionary journey, bound for Jerusalem. Luke indicates this mission involved collecting love-offerings for needy believers in back Jerusalem while strengthening the emerging churches. Paul knows it won't go well in Zion. The Holy Spirit, prophets, and wise counselors have all delivered warnings.

B. Today we find Paul in the port city of Miletus, close to Ephesus, where he served for about three years. He summons the Ephesian elders to give them final instructions and a loving farewell. There's many tears as Paul tells them this will be the last time this side of heaven they'll see his face.

C. Acts 20:17-32 (ESV) is our text today...

1) **V17-23:** *17 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. 18 And when they came to him, he said to them: "You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink (Paul didn't pull any punches!) from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (i.e. The Gospel) 22 And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, (Constrained: Compelled, led, bound and unified with the Holy Spirit.) not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. (Most believers don't feel "led" to go places where affliction awaits.)*

2) **V24-25:** *24 But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. (That's a banner we all should fly!) 25 And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. (Grown men start crying. We shed many tears this side of heaven!)*

3) **V26:** *26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, (i.e. Innocent of proclaiming anything false or errant or omitting anything that could lead someone to damnation instead of their salvation.)*

4) **V27 is our crux verse:** *27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. (Gk Boulē: "boo-lay") (The whole counsel of God--the kit & the caboodle!)*

5) **V28-32 Paul then gives these pastors a solemn charge:** *28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood. 29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. 32 And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is*

able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. (A decade later the wolves are will have arrived and they would not go quietly...)

D. So What is the Whole Counsel of God? The Boulē?

1) The ESV Study Bible says: "The whole counsel of God refers to the entirety of God's redemptive plan unfolded in Scripture. Even though parts of God's Word were unpopular or difficult, Paul did not omit any of them in his preaching. In refusing to pass over teachings that might have offended some, Paul gave a courageous example that is a model for all who would teach God's Word after him."

2) The Westminster Confession declares: "Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these: *etc...* All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life. 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; unto which nothing at any time is to be added whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men."

3) Your pastor's definition is this: All that God has inspired to be written, His inerrant and infallible revealed truth, contained in 66 books of the Bible, His Word regarding His will and ways, plans and purposes, all converging upon His redemptive act of salvation carried out by God the Son, Jesus Christ via the cross and empty tomb. (***See today's notes for more.***)

4) The author of Hebrews says it best regarding God's Word. Hebrews 4:12 (NASB) says: 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.

E. God's Word has something to say about everything. The commandments, prophecies, poems, proverbs, parables, miracles, gospels, epistles, even the documented failures and victories, reveal that God's Word is altogether relevant, declaring: God's sovereignty, holiness, and goodness; His Creation; our rebellion, sin, and fall; His redemption of fallen man through Christ Jesus' sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection. Relevant likewise to our consequential relationships with Him or without Him; our relationships and practices as they relate to family, church, and government; our relationships and practices as they relate to neighbors, strangers, and enemies; relative to faith and practice regarding work, education, recreation, as well as the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure; and all things temporal and eternal. God's Word, in its powerful and beautiful entirety, is absolutely relevant and necessary! Author, Rosaria Butterfield said: "If God is the Creator of all things, and if the Bible has His seal of truth and power, then the Bible has the right to interrogate my life and culture, and not the other way around."

F. If I gave you all maps of Fairfield and Licking County and told you to drive to Darke County, Brown County, or Monroe County, besides being puzzled, most of you would get lost. The maps I issued you would be correct, but insufficient. There are 88 counties in Ohio and you'd not only need 88 maps but then you'd need to lay out those 88 maps in the right geographical order to figure out where you're at and where you're

going. The same is true with the Whole Counsel of God. But I will say this in terms of the Scriptures: All roads do lead to Christ Jesus our Lord and His cross!

G. A dozen or so years following Paul's tearful farewell to the Ephesian elders in Miletus, Paul finds himself in the Mamertine Prison in Rome. He's facing execution at the hands of Nero. To his beloved spiritual son, Timothy, he pens what is essentially his last will and testament. As we might expect, Paul has a charge for Timothy and by extension to us as well. Listen again with fresh ears...

H. 2 Timothy 3:10-17 (NIV) *10 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, 11 persecutions, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. (Paul wore the tattoos of persecution but bore the testimonies of God's many faithful rescues.) 12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (Timothy was a recipient of the Whole Counsel of God which was faithfully delivered to him by his mother, grandmother, the Apostle Paul, and many others.) (How essential is the Whole Counsel of God's Word? Listen closely to V16 & 17) 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

I. Paul keeps rolling in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (NIV) *1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. (This is why we preach and endeavor to adhere to the Whole Counsel of God's Word!) 3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (Extra Biblical accounts indicate that Timothy fulfilled his charge, and died by being stoned and clubbed to death for fearlessly declaring God's Word--all of it! And where did this happen? Ephesus!)*

J. Last week I told you to never be ashamed of your Rescuer. Today I tell you to never be ashamed of your Rescuer's Book. The Rescuer's Book is all about Him but written just for you. It is trust-worthy. It is powerful. It supersedes the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of all mankind. It is saturated with His love, His mercy, and His grace. And it will change your life!

K. Close with quote from the late Baptist preacher, Adrian Rogers: "It is better to be divided by truth than to be united in error. It is better to speak the truth that hurts and then heals, than falsehood that comforts and then kills. Let me tell you something, friend, it is not love and it is not friendship if we fail to declare the whole counsel of God. It is better to be hated for telling the truth, than to be loved for telling a lie. It is impossible to find anyone in the Bible who was a power for God who did not have enemies and was not hated. It's better to stand alone with the

truth, than to be wrong with a multitude. It is better to ultimately succeed with the truth than to temporarily succeed with a lie. There is only one Gospel and Paul said, 'If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed'."

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Acts 20:17-32 (ESV)

17 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. **18** And when they came to him, he said to them: "You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, **19** serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; **20** how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, **21** testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. **22** And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, **23** except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. **24** But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. **25** And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. **26** Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, **27** for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. **28** Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood. **29** I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; **30** and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. **31** Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. **32** And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Hebrews 4:12 (NASB)

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.

2 Timothy 3:10-17 (NIV)

10 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, **11** persecutions, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. **12** In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, **13** while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. **14** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and

have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, **15** and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **16** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, **17** so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 (NIV)

1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge: **2** Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. **3** For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. **4** They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. **5** But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

The Whole Counsel of God - Westminster Confession

"Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these: etc... All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life. 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; unto which nothing at any time is to be added whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men."

- Westminster Confession, Chapter 1, section VI, 1646.

The Whole Counsel of God - The ESV Study Bible

The whole counsel of God refers to the entirety of God's redemptive plan unfolded in Scripture. Even though parts of God's Word were unpopular or difficult, Paul did not omit any of them in his preaching. In refusing to pass over teachings that might have offended some, Paul gave a courageous example that is a model for all who would teach God's Word after him.

- Theological Note on Acts 20:27, *The ESV Study Bible*, Crossway, p. 2130.

Quote by Rosaria Butterfield

"If God is the Creator of all things, and if the Bible has His seal of truth and power, then the Bible has the right to interrogate my life and culture, and not the other way around."

Quote by Adrian Rogers

"It is better to be divided by truth than to be united in error. It is better to speak the truth that hurts and then heals, than falsehood that comforts and then kills. Let me tell you something, friend, it is not love and it is not friendship if we fail to declare the whole counsel of God. It is better to be hated for telling the truth, than to be loved for telling a lie. It is impossible to find anyone in the Bible who was a power for God who did not have enemies and was not hated. It's better to stand alone with the truth, than to be

wrong with a multitude. It is better to ultimately succeed with the truth than to temporarily succeed with a lie. There is only one Gospel and Paul said, 'If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed'."

[Video Clips & Important Articles](#)

Phil Keaggy - Concert in Granville, Nov 8th, Spring Hills Baptist/Living Waters Benefit
<https://www.itickets.com/events/434404>

What Does It Mean to Preach the Whole Counsel of God? - Justin Taylor
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/what-does-it-mean-to-preach-the-whole-counsel-of-god/>

What Does it Mean to Preach the Whole Counsel of God? - Dr Julius Kim
<https://www.wscal.edu/resource-center/what-does-it-mean-to-preach-the-whole-counsel-of-god>

What is the Whole Counsel of God? - GotQuestions.org
<https://www.gotquestions.org/whole-counsel-of-God.html>

[Bonus Stuff](#)

[Galatians 1:6-10 \(NASB\)](#)

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; **7** which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. **8** But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! **9** As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! **10** For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

[1 Peter 5:1-4 \(NIV\)](#)

1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: **2** Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; **3** not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. **4** And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

[James 3:1 \(AMP\)](#)

1 Not many [of you] should become teachers [serving in an official teaching capacity], my brothers and sisters, for you know that we [who are teachers] will be judged by a

higher standard [because we have assumed greater accountability and more condemnation if we teach incorrectly].

Hebrews 13:7 (ESV)

17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Ezekiel 33:1-9 (NIV)

1 The word of the LORD came to me: **2** “Son of man, speak to your people and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, **3** and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, **4** then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not heed the warning and the sword comes and takes their life, their blood will be on their own head. **5** Since they heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, their blood will be on their own head. If they had heeded the warning, they would have saved themselves. **6** But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes someone’s life, that person’s life will be taken because of their sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood.’ **7** “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from Me. **8** When I say to the wicked, ‘You wicked person, you will surely die,’ and you do not speak out to dissuade them from their ways, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. **9** But if you do warn the wicked person to turn from their ways and they do not do so, they will die for their sin, though you yourself will be saved.

The Whole Counsel of God - The Reformation Study Bible

Whole Counsel of God: The revelation of God culminating in His Son, Jesus Christ. Paul in his ministry to the Ephesians, did not suppress any truths of the gospel, "anything that was profitable" to his hearers (v. 20), but preached the full gospel to Jew and Gentile. Throughout his ministry, he always uses tact and discretion but never compromises the good news.

- Theological note on Acts 20:27, *The Reformation Study Bible*, Reformation Trust, p. 1955.

Rev. F. Kilvert on the Whole Counsel of God

"To inquire what is meant by, the *whole counsel of God*? And this inquiry need not detain us long. The concurrent sense of the most eminent commentators seems to fix it to the meaning of the whole compass of Christian doctrine--the entire system of revealed truth."

- By Rev. F. Kilvert, M.A., Sermon: The Whole Counsel of God, 1840.

Charles Spurgeon on Paul and the Whole Counsel of God

"1. In the first place, THE APOSTLE'S WORD AT PARTING: "I call you to record I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." The first thing that strikes us is the declaration of the apostle concerning *the doctrines he had preached*. He had preached ALL the counsel of God. By which I think we are to understand that he had

given to his people the entire gospel. He had not dwelt upon some one doctrine of it, to the exclusion of the rest; but it had been his honest endeavour to bring out every truth according to the analogy of faith. He had not magnified one doctrine into a mountain, and then diminished another into a molehill; but he had endeavoured to present all blended together, like the colours in the rainbow, as one harmonious and glorious whole. Of course, he did not claim for himself any infallibility as a man, although as an inspired man he was without error in his writings. He had, doubtless, sins to confess in private, and faults to bemoan God. He had, doubtless, sometimes failed to put a truth as clearly as he could have wished, when preaching the Word; he had not always been earnest as he could desire; but at least he could claim this, that he had not willfully kept back a single part of the truth as it is in Jesus. Now, I must bring down the apostle's saying to these modern times; and I take it, if any one of us would clear our conscience by delivering the whole counsel of God, we must take care that we preach in the first place the *doctrines of the gospel*. We ought to declare the grand doctrine of the Father's love towards His people from before all worlds. His sovereign choice of them, His covenant purposes concerning them, and His immutable promises to them, must all be uttered with trumpet tongue. Coupled with this the true evangelist must never fail to set forth the beauties of the person of Christ, the glory of His offices, the completeness of His work, and above all, the efficacy of His blood. Whatever we omit, this must be in the most forcible manner proclaimed again and again. That is no gospel which has not Christ in it, and the modern idea of preaching THE TRUTH instead of Christ, is a wicked device of Satan. Nor is this all, for as there are Three Persons in the Godhead, we must be careful that they all have due honour in our ministry. The Holy Spirit's work in regeneration, in sanctification and in perseverance, must be always magnified from our pulpit. Without His power our ministry is a dead letter, and we cannot expect His arm to be made bare unless we honour Him day-by-day."

- Charles H. Spurgeon, Sermon: "*The Minister's Farewell*," # 289, Dec. 11, 1859.

Quote by R.C. Sproul

"Your task, O preacher, is to make sure that you are faithful to the text, that you are faithful to the proclamation of that gospel, that you are faithful to set forth the whole counsel of God, and then step back and let it happen."

Quote by Steven J. Lawson

"It matters to God what is preached. And it matters to Him how it is preached. No man is free to preach whatever and however he so chooses."

Quote by John MacArthur

"A failure to preach Scripture redirects people from a God-centered perspective to a man-centered perspective. It tends to undermine confidence... in Scripture."

Quote by Alistair Begg

"Unfortunately, preachers who distort God's Word are all too common today. Sometimes this springs from a sincere desire to soften hard hearts, but hearts aren't changed by compromise."

Quote by C.S. Lewis

"A man who first tried to guess 'what the public wants,' and then preached that as Christianity because the public wants it, would be a pretty mixture of fool and knave."

Quote by David Helm

"Some preachers use the Bible the way a drunk uses a lamppost--more for support than for illumination."

Quote by Billy Graham

"When we preach or teach the Scriptures, we open the door for the Holy Spirit to do His work. God has not promised to bless oratory or clever preaching. He has promised to bless His Word."

Quote by Charles Spurgeon

"The motto of all true servants of God must be, 'We preach Christ; and Him crucified.' A sermon without Christ in it is like a loaf of bread without any flour in it. No Christ in your sermon, sir? Then go home, and never preach again until you have something worth preaching."

Quote by Charles Spurgeon

"There is an infinite majesty about every line of Scripture, but especially about that part of Scripture in which the Lord reveals Himself and His glorious plan of saving grace in the person of His dear Son Jesus Christ."

Quote by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

"We all therefore have to face this ultimate and final question: Do we accept the Bible as the Word of God, as the sole authority in all matters of faith and practice, or do we not? Is the whole of my thinking governed by Scripture, or do I come with my reason and pick and choose out of Scripture and sit in judgment upon it, putting myself and modern knowledge forward as the ultimate standard and authority? The issue is crystal clear. Do I accept Scripture as a revelation from God, or do I trust to speculation, human knowledge, human learning, human understanding and human reasons. Or, putting it still more simply, do I pin my faith to, and subject all my thinking to, what I read in the Bible? Or do I defer to modern knowledge, to modern learning, to what people think today, to what we know at this present time which was not known in the past? It is inevitable that we occupy one or the other of those two positions."

Quote by Herschel Hobbs

"The Bible contains truth found nowhere else. Human reason may discover certain truths about God. But the revealed truth of the Bible exceeds these so as to defy comparison. One may exhaust the meaning of the contents of other books, but not that of the Bible."

- Herschel H. Hobbs (1907-1995) was one of the leading Christian communicators of the twentieth century. He served as pastor of First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City for nearly twenty-five years and also wrote or edited 147 books and Bible commentaries.

Quote by Robert Plummer

"The canon is not an authorized collection of writings (in that the church conferred its authority or approval upon a list of books). Rather, the canon is a collection of authoritative writings... that have an inherent authority as works uniquely inspired by God. Canonization is the process of recognizing that inherent authority, not bestowing it from an outside source."

- Robert L. Plummer is professor of New Testament Interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY and serves as an elder at Sojourn Community Church.

Quote by Salmon P. Chase

"There came a time in my life when I doubted the divinity of the Scriptures, and I resolved as a lawyer and a judge I would try the Book as I would try anything in the courtroom, taking evidence for and against. It was a long, serious and profound study and using the same principles of evidence in this religious matter as I always do in secular matters, I have come to the decision that the Bible is a supernatural Book, that it has come from God, and that the only safety for the human race is to follow its teachings."

- Salmon Portland Chase (1808-1873) was a U.S. politician and jurist who served as the sixth Chief Justice of the United States. He also served as the 23rd Governor of Ohio, represented Ohio in the United States Senate, and served as the 25th United States Secretary of the Treasury.

Quote by Thomas Carlyle

"The Bible is the truest utterance that ever came by alphabetic letters from the soul of man, through which, as through a window divinely opened, all men can look into the stillness of eternity, and discern in glimpses their far-distant, long-forgotten home."

- Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was a Scottish philosopher, satirical writer, essayist, translator, historian, mathematician, and teacher.

Quote by Charles Colson

"The Bible--banned, burned, beloved. More widely read, more frequently attacked than any other book in history. Generations of intellectuals have attempted to discredit it, dictators of every age have outlawed it and executed those who read it. Yet soldiers carry it into battle believing it more powerful than their weapons. Fragments of it smuggled into solitary prison cells have transformed ruthless killers into gentle saints."

Quote by Albert Baird Cummins

"The empire of Caesar is gone; the legions of Rome are smoldering in the dust; the avalanches of Napoleon hurled upon Europe have melted away, the prince of the pharaohs is fallen; the pyramids they raised to be their tombs are sinking every day in the desert sands; Tyre is a rock for bleaching fisherman's nets; Sidon has scarcely left a wreck behind; but the Word of God still survives: All things that threatened to extinguish it have only aided it; and it proves every day how transient is the noblest monument that men can build, how enduring is the least word that God has spoken"

- Albert Baird Cummins (1850-1926) was American lawyer and politician. He was the 18th Governor of Iowa elected to three consecutive terms and U.S. Senator for Iowa serving for 18 years.

Quote by John Wesley

"I now propose short, clear, and strong arguments prove the divine inspiration of the holy Scriptures. The Bible must be the invention either (1) of good men or angels, (2) of bad men or devils, or (3) of God. It could not be the invention of good men or angels; they neither would nor could make a book, and tell lies all the time they were writing it, saying, *"Thus says the Lord,"* when it was their own invention. It could not be the invention of bad men or devils; for they would not make a book which commands all duty, forbids all sin, and condemns their souls to hell to all eternity. Therefore, I draw this conclusion, that the Bible must be given by divine inspiration."

Quote by John Flavel

"The Scriptures teach us the best way of living, the noblest way of suffering, and the most comfortable way of dying"

- John Flavel (1630-1691) was an English Presbyterian clergyman, puritan, and author.

Quote by Samuel James

"'Doctrine divides, Jesus unites' may be a catchy slogan, but it's actually nonsense. Theology is simply what happens when thinking carefully and deeply about what God has told us in Scripture. Doctrine is not a stumbling block but a rock solid foundation on which to base our hearts and minds. Jesus says that true worshipers worship in "spirit and in truth." That means that in order for Christian readers to truly worship God they must think truthfully about Him, and that means doing theology."

- Samuel James, Associate Editor at Crossway Publishing, excerpted from article titled, *"5 Myths about Christian Publishing."* To read the full article, go to: <https://www.crossway.org/articles/5-myths-about-christian-publishing/>

Hymn Lyrics by John Newton

Precious Bible! What a treasure
Does the Word of God afford?
All I want for life or pleasure,
Food and medicine, shield and sword:
Let the world account me poor,
Having this I need no more.