



Truth

On Tough Texts

WWW.THESCRPTUREALONE.COM

A MINISTRY OF GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

ISSUE 83 (May/June 2013)

“It is Written”

Selected Scriptures

THE GREEK LANGUAGE IS NOTHING LESS than fascinating. It is no wonder that God chose to use it to record His final messages to men. Why? For one thing, Greek is the most precise of all earthly languages. It has tenses, voices, and moods that are alien to our weak English tongue. It is for that very reason that the biblical languages (especially Greek) are so critical to the expositor. Without an understanding of what the text actually says, it is impossible to get to the full Truth. God chose to use such precision to present theological truth clearly.

Additionally, Greek was at that time virtually universal, being spoken by nearly everyone in the world. The most fascinating thing about this is how it came to be. While Aramaic was the common language, this dramatically changed because of the conquest of Alexander the Great. He marched from modern day Greece, through Turkey (ancient Asia Minor), down through Syria into Egypt, back across through Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and to the borders of India. By the time of his death in 323 BC, Greek language and culture permeated the known world. This empire soon fell to the Romans, but Greek culture still dominated. What an example of the sovereignty and providence of God!

A (Very) Brief Grammar Lesson

I pray you did not groan when you read the above heading. Please bear with me because this is crucial to our theme. Much of Greek’s exactitude is dramatically seen in its complex verbs (admittedly, its hardest component). Part of that lies in the verb tenses. The tense of a verb actually specifies two things: not only *time* but *aspect*, the latter, in fact, being the most important. As one Greek grammar explains, “The basic genius of the Greek verb is not its ability to indicate *when* the action of the verb occurs (time), but *what type of*

action it describes [aspect].”¹

One such aspect is “continuous,” which obviously means that the action of the verb is ongoing, continuing. “I am reading,” you could say. A symbol commonly used in grammar books to help picture the Greek *present tense* is simply a line: —. The second aspect a verb can possess is “neutral” (or “undefined”), which means the verb pictures a simple event without any process, as in the *aorist tense*, the simple past tense indicating completed action. So, after you finish this article, you could say, “I read.” A symbol commonly used for this is a dot: ●.

Okay, so why the boring grammar lesson? The reason is to get to the third aspect of a Greek verb, namely, *completed action with present effects* (or completed action with an emphasis on the resulting state of being). This is the *perfect tense*, which in a sense is a merging of the present and aorist. This tense actually underscores the serious limitations of English, which has no exact way to express the perfect. For example, saying, “I read,” indicates past action whether continuous or neutral. In other words, it doesn’t indicate that you finished the reading. Depending upon the needs of the context, then, the best we can do is either use a helping word such as “has” and “have” or use the English present tense. We might, therefore say either, “I have read” or “it is read.” The latter (English present), in fact, is close to the perfect. A symbol commonly used for this is: ●→.

The perfect tense, therefore, is extremely important, often expressing great theological truths. Without doubt the most important instance, as well as the most important statement in Scripture, appears in John 19:30, when our Lord said from the cross, “It is finished.” (If we may interject, is it not a wondrous thought that the *first* recorded words of our Lord were, “I must be about my Father’s business” [Lk. 2:49] and His

last were “It is finished”?) The aorist tense (“the work is done”) would not be enough. The perfect tense tells us that the work of redemption was completed but also with the result of continuing consequence. That brings us to our theme.

The Greek Behind “It is Written”

One of the truly amazing words in the Greek New Testament (NT) is the verb *gegraptai* (Greek script γεγραπται). The root *graphē* simply means “writing,” giving us such English words as “graph” and “photography.” In the perfect tense, however, the verb *graphō* (“to write”) assumes extraordinary power and implications. While Scripture was written in the past, the resulting state of being *is* its continuing significance and applicability. “It *is* written,” therefore, is better than “It has been written.” (“It stands written” might be even better.)

The Significance of “It is Written”

The real significance of this is how *gegraptai* applies to the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture, a doctrine that is, as we will see later, on the decline. *Gegraptai* is perhaps, in fact, the most powerful proof of that doctrine. Using a grammatical structure in a precise human language, God has built into His Word the absolute assurance that not only were His exact words written down as He intended them, but also that the result would be a lasting effect. In short, He promises that His Word will forever be preserved.

As one noted Greek authority submits, “What is quoted as *gegraptai* is normative because it is guaranteed by the binding power of Yahweh.”² In other words, the use of the perfect tense indicates that whatever Scripture says creates continually authoritative standards by God’s power.

Now, if *gegraptai* (and the translation, “It is written”) appeared only occasionally, we might innocently overlook it or even be tempted to disregard its significance. But this word appears no less than **67** times in the Greek NT. These instances fall into four categories, the first being the largest.

In Reference to the Old Testament Scriptures

There are 62 instances of *gegraptai* that refer to the Old Testament (OT) Scriptures.³ Among the most notable of these are the three occurrences during Jesus’ temptation in Matthew 4:1–10. To each of Satan’s allurements, our Lord responded with “It is written” followed by a quotation from Deuteronomy.⁴ Commentator William Hendriksen comments: “Note the expression, ‘It is written’ [in vv. 4, 7, and 10], every time with a reference to the same book, Deuteronomy, which, as is clear, Jesus regarded not as ‘a pious fraud’ but as the very Word of God.”⁵ Greek scholar M. R. Vincent adds: “The perfect tense. ‘It has been written, and stands written.’ The first recorded words of Jesus after this entrance upon his ministry are an assertion of the authority of scripture.”⁶

Writing on another occurrence of “It is written” in Mark 1:2, another Greek authority, Kenneth Wuest, writes:

Gegraptai; the perfect tense, speaking of an act completed in past time having present results, is used here to emphasize the fact that the OT records were not only carefully preserved and handed down from generation to

generation to the first century, but that they are a permanent record of what God said.⁷

Commenting on this verse in his word study book, Ralph Earle also notes the critical significance of the perfect tense:

The full force of the Greek is, “Even as it has been written and still stands written”—a mighty affirmation of the divine inspiration and authority of the OT Scriptures. This should be remembered when we read the simple English translation “As it is written.” Emphasizing the “is” will help bring this out.⁸

He makes a similar statement on Matthew 4:4, emphasizing there the “permanent state resulting from” the action.

Gegraptai appears 16 times in Romans, a particularly important one of which is in 1:17: “as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” This is, of course, a quotation of Habakkuk 2:4, the background of which is the conceit and arrogance of the Babylonians. The Hebrew behind “lifteth up” (*āpal*), which appears only here in the OT, literally means “to swell.” They were swollen, puffed up in their pride and self-confidence. In stark contrast, God declares that the righteous person will live by faith. So pivotal is this principle that it is quoted three times in the NT. By quoting this text in Romans 1:17, Paul says that *salvation* is by faith, in Galatians 3:11 he emphasizes that salvation is *not by works*, and in Hebrews 10:38 he adds that we now *live* by faith in all things. The use of the perfect tense here, then, underscores the preservation of what God’s Word says concerning salvation.

And so it is in these, and every other like instance of *gegraptai*, the perfect tense unambiguously declares the preservation of the OT. Noted Greek scholar, Daniel B. Wallace, makes this important statement concerning these occurrences of *gegraptai*:

This common introductory formula to OT quotations seems to be used to emphasize that the written word still exists. Although just beyond the reach of grammar, the exegetical and theological significance of this seem to be (in light of how it is used in the NT) that of present and binding authority. In other words *gegraptai*, could often be paraphrased thus: “Although this Scripture was written long ago, its authority is still binding on us” (a *very* loose paraphrase!).⁹

In Reference to the New Testament Scriptures

While there is only a single example of *gegraptai* referring to the NT Scriptures, it is a powerful one: “These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (Jn. 20:31). The words “These are written” translate *gegraptai*. It must be asked, “What is the antecedent of ‘these’?” At the very least it refers to all the things John has just recorded. He has already said, in fact, that he could have written much more (v. 30). “These” could also refer to his three epistles, since the evidence indicates he wrote them at the same time. Further still, it is possible that “these” even includes the other three Gospel records, since John was the last to write. Whichever is true, there is no doubt that John was referring not to

Scripture penned *before* him but Scripture being written *then* (i.e., *now* from John's perspective).

One other crucial point, in fact, that Greek grammarians make in regard to the perfect tense is that, as Wallace puts it, the existing results of the past action are "in relation to the time of the speaker."¹⁰ This is obviously important enough when a NT writer is referring back to the OT, but it is even more significant when the writer is referring to what is being written *now*. In other words, the writer is no longer looking back and saying the results of the action *then* are continuing till *now*, rather he is looking forward and saying that the effects of the action *now* are going to continue in the *future*.

In Reference to All of Scripture

There are two instances of *gegraptai* that point to all of Scripture. The first is 1 Corinthians 4:6, where Paul tells these prideful and factious folks not to "think of men above that which is written." Matthew Poole puts the matter well:

All the church of Corinth, as well ministers as people, might learn to have humble opinions and thoughts of themselves, not to think of themselves above what, by the rules of God's word, was written in the OT they ought to think; or above what he had before written in this Epistle, or to the Romans (Rom. 12:3).¹¹

As Albert Barnes adds, it is also possible that this refers "to the general strain of Scripture, requiring the children of God to be modest and humble."¹² John Gill likewise gives a nod that this could refer to "the word of God in general."¹³

Second, *gegraptai* also seems to appear in this capacity in Hebrews 10:7: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." "Volume" is the Greek *kephalis* (from *kephalē*, a head) and refers to the "head," that is, the knob, of the wooden rod on which Hebrew manuscripts were rolled; so *kephalis* came to be used metaphorically to designate a roll or "volume."

But *which* volume is in view here? The answer lies in the verse that is actually quoted, Psalm 40:7: "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me." In a clear messianic statement, it is declared that Christ is the theme of the entire "volume." Barnes comments:

Literally, "in the roll of the book." The phrase would most naturally denote the "scroll of the law;" but it might include any volume or roll where a record or prophecy was made. In a large sense it would embrace all that had been written at the command of God at the time when this was supposed to be spoken. That is, as spoken by the Messiah, it would include all the books of the OT.

Gill again adds, however, that this could, in fact, also refer to the entire "book of the Scriptures . . . in general." After all, Christ is the theme of the entire Scriptures, so His command "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn. 5:39) includes all of what the Scripture reveals of Him. Likewise, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, [Christ] expounded unto [the disciples] in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Lk. 24:27), which again for us includes all Scripture.

In Reference to the Lamb's Book of Life

Finally, there are two additional occurrences of *gegraptai*, both in Revelation and both referring to those "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb from the foundation of the world" (13:8; cf. 17:8, "were not"). While these obviously do not relate directly to Scripture, they do underscore the significance of the perfect tense. The negative particle (*ou*, "not") indicates full and complete negation, so when coupled with the perfect tense underscores the continuing lost state of those not in the Lamb's Book. As one commentator writes: "The negation of the perfect tense emphasizes a permanent state of affairs; the name does not stand (or remain) written."¹⁴

The Application of "It is Written"

So what does all this mean? Why have we perhaps belabored the point? Our application is simply this: Whatever one's view might be on the issue of textual criticism, it can be stated on the full authority of *gegraptai* that any approach that in any way discounts, disregards, or detracts from the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture is seriously flawed. There is no ambiguity here, no gray area. *Gepraptai* without question underscores that *Scripture has been preserved by God*.

But *where* exactly has Scripture been preserved? Some of the greatest men in Church History answer that question for us. Francis Turretin (1623–1687) was a giant among theologians. Two great 19th-century theologians, Charles Hodge and R. L. Dabney, thought his work so important that they assigned the reading of his massive three-volume (2,223-page) *Institutes* to their students. Turretin likened versions to streams and the original autographs as the fountain from which they flow. He strongly maintained that while versions "may be exposed to errors and admit of corrections [they] nevertheless are authentic as to the doctrine they contain (which is divine and infallible)."¹⁵ In other words, scribal errors will inevitably creep in during copying, since men are imperfect, but what they are transmitting remains infallible. Elsewhere he makes an even stronger case for existing manuscripts; please note this very carefully:

By the original texts we do not mean the autographs written by the hand of Moses, or the prophets, and the apostles, which certainly do not now exist. We mean their apographs [copies] which are so called because they set forth to us the Word of God in the very words of those who wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. . . . The autographs and also the accurate and faithful copies may be the standard of all other copies of the same writing and of its translations.¹⁶

Now, *please* notice what Turretin says: he does *not* say that only the *autographs* are the originals but says that the *copies* are also the originals. Why? *Because they are preserved*.

This was also the view of the brilliant Puritan John Owen (1616–1683). Of *existing* (repeat, *existing*) copies, he wrote:

Of all the inventions of Satan to draw off the minds of men from the Word of God, this *decrying the author-*

ity of the originals [i.e., apographa, copies] seems to me the most pernicious. . . .¹⁷

The purity of the present original copies of the Scripture, or rather copies [apographa] in the original languages, which the Church of God doth now and hath for many ages enjoyed as her chiefest treasure. . . . We add, that *the whole Scripture*, entire as given out from God, without any loss, is preserved in the *copies of the originals* yet remaining. . . . In them all, we say, is every letter and tittle of the word. These copies, we say, are the rule, standard, and touchstone of all translations, ancient or modern, by which they are in all things to be examined, tried, corrected, amended; and themselves only by themselves.¹⁸

Following closely on the heels of those statements, Owen adds 12 arguments for why all this is true. The first five, in brief, are:

1. The *providence of God* in taking care of his word. . . .
2. The *religious care* of the church. . . .
3. The care of the first writers in giving out *authentic copies*. . . .
4. The *multiplying copies* to such a number that it was impossible any should corrupt them all, willfully or by negligence. . . .
5. The preservation of the *authentic copies*.

We read exactly the same view in the great historical Confessions of the Faith, the Westminster and London Baptist:

The OT in Hebrew . . . and the NT in Greek . . . being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical (Matt. 5:18). (Ch. 1, Sec. VIII)

“Authentical” clearly demonstrates that the divines considered the copies handed down through the ages to be preserved as the genuine, pure, and uncorrupted Word of God. Based on that belief, they could then write: “The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself” (Ch. 1, Sec. IX).

But it is that very doctrine, in fact, that is (and has been for some 150 years) under attack. Today we hear much about the “inerrant original manuscripts,” *but that was never the historical position of (or term used by) the Church*. Turretin, Owen, the Westminster divines, and others championed the “infallible copies.” They not only *believed* in the preservation of Scripture, but their words and actions *demonstrated* their belief—it wasn’t just rhetoric to them. They did not approach the text as is typically done today. They approached it not from a *rationalistic* perspective but from a *revelatory* one.

For unity sake I’ll not name them, but it is heart wrenching that some of the same scholars noted in this article who correctly *define* and *delineate* *gegraptai* still hold a view of textual criticism that *dilutes* and ultimately *denies* that very truth. The typical view today is, as one evangelical speaker expresses it: “Can we speak of our Bibles today as inspired? *In the technical sense we cannot*. . . . The preservation of the Word of God is perfectly accomplished by God *in heaven*. The preservation of God’s Word *on earth has been committed to people*” (emphasis added). Should not such statements deeply trouble us? Indeed, “Only the originals are inspired”

(originally postulated by B. B. Warfield, by the way) is practically a Gregorian chant nowadays. But again, while that is *modern* thinking, it is not *historical* thinking. Leaders of the past consistently recognized that God not only preserved His inspired Word but did so not in a handful of questionable and contradictory manuscripts (chosen entirely by rationalistic methods) but (as Owen makes clear) in several thousand that agree with each other, those always recognized by the church, in fact, as authentic. Once the “rationalism bug” bit, however, its toxin spread quickly and created a new way of thinking: it is now up to men to “discover” the right text since God has not preserved it. Gone is God’s *ruling power*, being replaced by men’s *rational prowess*.

And so it continues to be my prayer that more of God’s men today in pulpits and behind seminary lecterns will take the time (and I know how hard that commodity is to find) to revisit and rethink this foundational issue. I pray we will not only *read* the words “It is written” but *apply* them in our approach to the Sacred Text.¹⁹

Dr. J. D. Watson
Pastor-Teacher

NOTES

¹ William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar* (Zondervan, 1993, 2003), 126 (emphasis in the original).

² Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Eerdmans, 1964, 2006), Vol. I, 747.

³ *Matt.* 2:5; 4:4, 6, 7, 10; 11:10; 21:13; 26:24, 31; *Mk.* 1:2; 7:6; 9: 12, 13, 11:17; 14:21, 27; *Lk.* 2:23; 3:4; 4:4, 8, 10; 7:27; 10:26; 19:46; 24:46; *Jn.* 8:17; *Acts* 1:20; 7:42; 13:33; 15:15(16); 23:5; *Rom.* 1:17; 2:24; 3:4, 10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13, 33; 10:15; 11:8, 26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3, 9, 21; *1 Cor.* 1:19, 31; 2:9; 3:19; 9:9; 10:7; 14:21; 15:45; *2 Cor.* 8:15; 9:9; *Gal.* 3:10, 13; 4:22, 27; *1 Pet.* 1:16.

⁴ Verse 4 (Deut. 8:3), verse 7 (6:16), and verse 10 (6:13).

⁵ *New Testament Commentary: Matthew* (Baker Academic, 1973), 227.

⁶ *Vincent’s Word Studies* (public domain, electronic edition), *Matt.* 4:4.

⁷ *Wuest’s Word Studies* (Eerdmans, electronic edition), *Mk.* 1:2.

⁸ *Word Meanings in the New Testament* (Hendrickson, 1974, 1986), 29.

⁹ *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan, 1996), 576.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 573.

¹¹ *Matthew Poole’s Commentary* (public domain), *1 Cor.* 4:6.

¹² *Barnes Notes on the Bible* (public domain), *1 Cor.* 4:6.

¹³ *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* (public domain), *1 Cor.* 4:6.

¹⁴ Robert Thomas, *Revelation 8–22: An Exegetical Commentary* (Moody, 1996), 164.

¹⁵ Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1992), Vol 1., 125–126.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 106, 113.

¹⁷ “Divine Original, Authority, Self-Evidencing Light, and Power of the Scriptures.” To My Reverend and Worthy Friend, in *The Works of John Owen* (Leighton Publications, 1865), Vol. XVI (emphasis Owen’s).

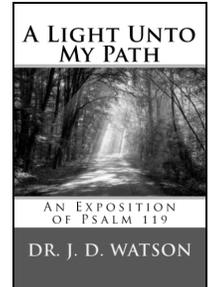
¹⁸ “Of the Integrity and Purity of the Hebrew and Greek of the Scriptures” (1659), Chapter 2, in *Works*, Vol. XVI (emphasis Owen’s).

¹⁹ For more on these issues, please see chapters 8, 11, 46, and 51 in the author’s *Truth on Tough Texts: Expositions of Challenging Scripture Passages* (Sola Scriptura Publications, 2012).

Books for God's Glory and Believer's Growth

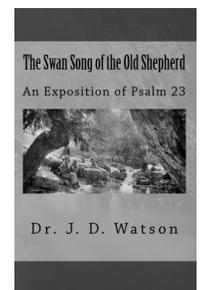
NEW BOOK: *A Light Unto My Path: An Exposition of Psalm 119*

Part of the incomprehensible miracle of inspiration is that God used the personality, experiences, and even words of each Scripture writer so that the result was not only what the *writer* wanted to say but also exactly what *God* wanted to say. There is no better example of this than in the Psalms. We see the whole gamut of human experience—the positives and the negatives—but God is in it all and controlling it all. Sometimes we see a psalmist at the absolute lowest point of his life, and at other times at the highest, but God used it all to convey His truth with absolute precision. Psalm 119 is such a psalm. We see the writer lofty and low, diligent and discouraged, fearless and frightened, victorious and vanquished. The more we read, however, we discover his secret. While many Christians today are looking for the newest trend for their excitement, or seeking the answers to problems by reading the latest self-help book, the psalmist *always* went to the Word of God. Why? Because only there did he find everything. Simply put, *Psalm 119 is devoted to praising the virtues, merits, and sufficiency of the Word of God and demonstrates the author's total commitment to it.* While it cannot compare with a classic such as Charles Spurgeon's, this book is a complete, verse-by-verse, usually word-by-word, exposition of the Psalm. Based on a series of messages preached on consecutive Lord's Day mornings from July 2007 through January 2008, it is rich in word studies, clearly outlined, and carefully applied. It is meant to be an encouragement, challenge, and source of growth to God's people. (282 pages) [1 Copy, \$13.00; 2–3 copies, \$12.00 ea.; 4–5 copies, \$11.00; 6+, \$10.00 ea. — Also available on Amazon.com and for Kindle Reader.]



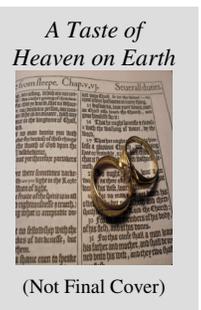
NEW BOOK: *The Swan Song of the Old Shepherd: An Exposition of Psalm 23*

This 50-page book reproduces a four-part series first preached by the author in July 2010. While it takes only about 40 seconds to read its 118 words, Psalm 23 is among the most comforting passages in all of Scripture. Its language is not scientific, philosophical, legal, or even all that theological. It is short, simple, and sweet, but, oh, so sublime! Oddly, sermons on Psalm 23 are often preached only at funerals, for here are truths that are not for the dead but for the living. David refers to the LORD as his Shepherd (*Jehovah-Rō'y*), and a Shepherd is for the living sheep, not the dead ones. This psalm is for every child of God for every aspect of life now. So, “using common ancient near-eastern images,” one expositor observes, “David progressively unveils his personal relationship with the LORD.” In beautiful poetry, David provides us with five emphases. After first speaking of the Shepherd's *person*, he then exults in what he receives from his Shepherd: *provision, paths, protection, and permanence.* [1 Copy, \$5.50; 2–3 copies, \$5.50 ea.; 4–5 copies, \$4.50; 6+, \$4.00 ea. — Also available on Amazon.com and for Kindle Reader— The MP3s of these messages are also on our website.]



NEW BOOK: *A Taste of Heaven on Earth: Marriage and Family in Ephesians 5:18–6:4*

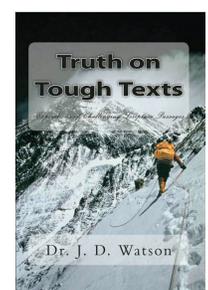
This 200-page book was originally part of the author's three-and-one-half-year exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians (which is scheduled for release in 2015). While it is still included in that full exposition, of course, the publisher felt that it should also be made available in this separate volume. Because of the great need for clear and solely biblical teaching concerning marriage and the family in our day, it was felt that making this material available separately would make it much more accessible and usable. It is hoped that it will be of use to couples preparing for marriage, couples and families needing answers to pressing problems, and perhaps even Bible study groups. Its nine chapters include: Foundations of the Christian Home; The Meaning and Motives of Marriage; The Model for Marriage (“Solomon's Song”); The Responsibilities of the Wife; The Proverbs 31 Woman; The Responsibilities of the Husband; The Tragedy of Divorce; The Responsibilities of Children; and The Responsibilities of Parents. [1 Copy, \$12.00; 2–3 copies, \$11.00 ea.; 4–5 copies, \$10.00; 6+, \$9.00 ea. — Also available on Amazon.com and for Kindle Reader]



(Not Final Cover)

Truth on Tough Texts: Expositions of Challenging Scripture Passages

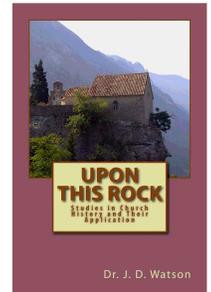
Was Matthias God's choice to replace Judas (Acts 1:15-26)? What is the identity of those “sons of God” referred to in Genesis 6? Are the “angels” of the seven churches real angels or pastors (Rev. 1:20)? Is there a so-called call to ministry (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:1)? Is “deaconess” a valid church office (1 Tim. 3:11)? What is the “sealing” of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14)? Is “regeneration” absent from the Old Testament, being a New Testament doctrine only (Isa. 57:15; Eph. 2:1)? What do other terms that appear in Scripture mean, such as: “fall away” (Heb. 6:4-6), “old man” (Rom. 6:6), and “new creature” (2 Cor. 5:17)? Those are just a few of the “tough texts” we find in Scripture. While Scripture is infallible, never contradicting itself, and while it is literal and straightforward, not mysterious and ambiguous, there are some texts that raise questions and have therefore prompted varied “interpretations” throughout Church History. Again, such texts are certainly not “less inspired” than the rest of Scripture, rather simply more intricate and complex and thereby demand especially diligent investigation. This 598-page book therefore, addresses many texts of



Scripture that have historically been debated, are particularly difficult to understand, or have generated questions among believers. The chapters that follow originally appeared in the monthly publication, *Truth on Tough Texts*, which was launched by the author in August 2005. They reappear here so that they might reach a wider audience, as well as provide a quick reference for longtime readers of the monthly offerings. This was the premier book of Sola Scriptura Publications, founded in 2012. [1 Copy, \$25.00; 2–10 copies, \$23.00 ea.; 11–20 copies, \$21.00; 21+: \$20.00 ea. — Also available on Amazon.com and for Kindle Reader.]

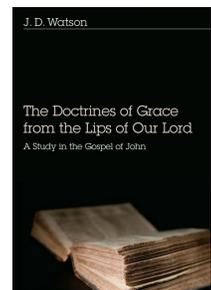
Upon This Rock: Studies in Church History and Their Application

The sequel to *Truth on Tough Texts* above, this book is the collection of articles on historical issues from the first six years of the monthly publication, *Truth on Tough Texts*. The Reformation, for example, is misunderstood by many, ignored by some, and even attacked by others. It is, therefore, a major emphasis here in chapters 3 through 8. Even Church History itself, as is history in general nowadays, is viewed by many as unimportant, if not wholly irrelevant. “Why look backward?” it is argued. “We should only look forward and be about our Father’s business in the here and now.” Such an attitude, however, is not only foolish but downright dangerous. As we will note in chapter 1, Spanish-born American philosopher and writer George Santayana (1863–1952) made the now famous statement, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Well, the Church as a whole has, indeed, forgotten much of the past, and the lessons we should learn from it, and is repeating many of the same errors. This book, therefore, begins in Part I with “Our Foundation,” in which we examine the value of studying Church History and then study the deep significance of the words of our Lord in Matthew 16:16–19, “Upon this rock.” Part II, “The Five Solas of the Reformation,” is the heart of our study in which we examine the core issues of the Reformation and are challenged with their importance for our day. Part III, “Other History Lessons,” addresses other historical figures and events that are critical for our understanding in a day of growing indifference to these matters. There are also more than 60 illustrations, most of which were not in the original articles. (220 pages) [1 Copy, \$12.00; 2–3 copies, \$11.00 ea.; 4–5 copies, \$10.00; 6+, \$9.00 ea. — Also available on Amazon.com and for Kindle Reader]



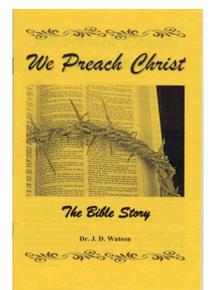
The Doctrines of Grace from the Lips of Our Lord: A Study in the Gospel of John

The doctrine of salvation is the watershed doctrine of Scripture. Flowing from that doctrine will be not only all other doctrine but also personal practice and Christian ministry. The major controversy concerning salvation is whether it is a result of the sovereign grace of God alone or a mixture of “God’s part” and “man’s part.” Addressing that issue is absolutely critical to the very foundations of Christianity itself. Whichever one of those premises is correct, we should expect to find it everywhere we look in Scripture, and that is precisely what we find. There is no truth that permeates the Bible more than the doctrines of God’s sovereign grace. From Genesis to Revelation, in literally hundreds of verses, these doctrines call, capture, and command our attention. Of the many books of the Bible we could choose, the Gospel of John is among the most compelling because of its foundational nature. It is there we find some of the most profound teaching on the Doctrines of Grace in all Scripture. Examining more than one hundred verses in John, this small volume presents these great biblical and historical doctrines directly from the lips of our Lord. (137 pages) [1 or 2 copies: \$15.00; 3+: \$14.00 ea. — Also available on Amazon.com or from the publisher, <https://WipfAndStock.com>]



We Preach Christ: The Bible Story (booklet)

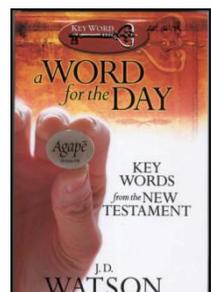
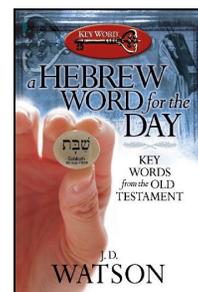
This 28-page booklet reproduces a message first preached by the author on January 6, 2013. From Genesis to Revelation, from the beginning to the end, the Bible is all about Christ, and it is He who we preach. To underscore this central theme, the Bible story is briefly told in a seven act drama: the creation, the curse, the comfort, the calamity, the contract, the coming, and the consummation. The end purpose, then, is two-fold: First, it is an encouragement to those who are already Christians to understand the central theme of the Bible, in contrast to the prevailing ideas in our day of what the Bible is about. While it is short, we pray it is comprehensive enough to challenge each of us with what our message really is. Second, we also pray that God will use this little work in the lives of readers who are not yet Christian believers. Appendix B offers a clear, biblical presentation of the saving Gospel of Christ. We pray they will see what the Bible is truly about and how it addresses their real need. [Single copies, \$2.00; 30 or more, \$1.00 each. — Also available in PDF or Kindle Reader FREE from the publisher via e-mail. — *One FREE copy is included with every order.* — The MP3 of this message is also on our website.]



A Word for the Day: Key Words from the New Testament

A Hebrew Word for the Day: Key Words from the Old Testament

Words matter! After all, we use words every day. They convey our thoughts, feelings, attitudes, ideas, purposes, goals, joys, sorrows—in short, everything. While English is even more universal in our day than Greek or Hebrew were in Bible times, the wealth in studying these languages is inestimable. The purpose of these books is to share with you the richness of some of the Greek words used in the New Testament and Hebrew words in the Old Testament and to help you make them practical in your Christian living. Since words matter, the words of Scripture matter most. And in a day when words don’t seem to mean much, the need for precision in Christian doctrine and practice has never been more critical. Each day of the year we examine a particular word by first presenting a brief word study and



then a practical application to make that word real in your life. For reinforcement, each day also includes other related verses that you can study on your own. It has been my desire for many years to write a daily devotional that would not only contain deep spiritual Truth but also be easy to read. In our day of Relativism, the absolutes of God's Word (and words) are desperately needed. I pray these book will bless your heart, enrich your mind, stir your soul, and empower your life. They should prove useful to pastors, teachers, and all Christian Believers who desire a deeper understanding and application of "God's Words." The writing of these books was one of the greatest joys of my life and one of the most profitable exercises of my ministry for our Lord. I pray it will likewise be a joy and profit to you. [Where to get them: We do not stock these two titles, but you can easily get them from Christian Book Distributors (CBD), Amazon.com, a Christian book store, or the publisher (AMG Publishers).]

For more information on all titles, please visit our website (www.TheScriptureAlone.com).

(NOTE: Our website is currently down, but we are working to get it back up with a whole new look.)

Sola Scriptura Publications

P.O. Box 235 — Meeker, CO — 81641
 970-878-3228 or 970-618-8375
 sspmail1521@gmail.com

Order Form¹

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Email (optional) _____

Qty.	Title	Price Each	Total Price
1	We Preach Christ: The Bible Story	FREE	FREE ²
		Sub-Total	
		<i>Entirely Optional Shipping Donation</i>	
		TOTAL³	\$

All proceeds go toward publishing other books to God's glory and believer's growth.

¹ PLEASE NOTE: We do not carry a supply of either *A Word for the Day* or *A Hebrew Word for the Day* (AMG Publishers). The best price is on Amazon.com.

² One FREE copy with any order of at least one other book title. Additional copies may be purchased.

³ We apologize, but to keep prices down, we do not accept credit cards at this time. All proceeds go toward publishing other books.

BLOG: *Tas Membranas* <http://tas-membranas.blogspot.com/> (book reviews)

BLOG: *Expositing Ephesians* blog: (<http://expositingephesians.blogspot.com>).

Other recommendations: John Calvin for Today (<http://johncalvinfortoday.blogspot.com/>); I Love Theology (<http://ilovetheology.blogspot.com/>)

Truth On Tough Texts

A Ministry of
Grace Bible Church
P.O. Box 235
Meeker, CO 81641
www.TheScriptureAlone.com
sspmail1521@gmail.com
A F.I.R.E. Church
www.FireFellowship.org

This monthly publication is intended to address Scriptures that have historically been debated, are particularly difficult to understand, or have generated questions among Believers. We hope it will be an encouragement and challenge to God's people to carefully examine and discern Truth. While the positions presented here are based on years of careful biblical research, we recognize that other respected men of God differ.

If you have a question that perplexes you, please send it along so we might address it either in a full length article or in a "Reader Questions" issue. Other comments are also warmly welcomed, and letters to the editor will be published.

This publication is sent free of charge to anyone who requests it. To aid in the ministry, tax-deductible donations will be greatly appreciated, but never demanded. If you know someone you think would enjoy TOTT, please send along their address.