

# TRUTH ON TOUGH TEXTS

EXPOSITIONS OF CHALLENGING SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

WWW.THESCRIPTUREALONE.COM

FROM SOLA SCRIPTURA PUBLICATIONS

ISSUE 89 (MAY/JUNE 2014)

## THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF CESSATIONISM

### 1 CORINTHIANS 13:8

**E**ARLY IN THE HISTORY OF THIS HUMBLE PUBLICATION we addressed our text: “. . . whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.” As we observed there, the Greek construction indicates that these would literally “cease of themselves,” that is, just fade away, and would, in fact, not return. We say then without apology: that is the absolute fact of the language, regardless of those today who don’t like it and therefore just deny it. As we also documented, when we study Church History we see without any ambiguity whatsoever that this is exactly what happened—the temporary gifts faded away, never to return.<sup>1</sup>

Since then, however, the noncessationist view—the novel, 20<sup>th</sup>-century idea that all the sign gifts are still occurring—has risen to the forefront like never before. While I addressed this in more detail in the aforementioned material, I feel compelled to emphasize one particular aspect of the issue in fuller depth and detail.<sup>2</sup> I will tell you why in a moment. To be succinct:

*The cessationist position is the only one that emphasizes, defends, and protects the absolute authority, completeness, and sufficiency of Scripture. Anything else opens wide the door of extra-biblical revelation.*

Now, the reason we emphasize this so strongly is because of the increasing openness there is to noncessationist teaching. More and more evangelicals, in fact, are saying that they believe God can and might still work in this way in some instances (e.g., pastor **John Piper** and theologian **Wayne Grudem**). Some often say it this way: “God can do anything He wants, so we are not going to limit Him by saying that He doesn’t work in some particular way.”

A very popular way of expressing this idea is: “We should be *open* but *cautious*.” In other words, we must be very careful of *abuse* but still be open to the *possibility* of God working in this way.” All this sounds very noble and spiritual, but *it is extremely dangerous*. For one thing, in this “caution” how exactly are we to determine a valid occurrence? For another, we submit that once you open that door, it is virtually impossible to close it and anything is allowed to enter.

I would like to quote a tiny portion of an article written in 2003 by **Edgar Thomas**, a professor at The Master’s Seminary:

I do wish to issue a warning about the dangers of a “charismatic sympathy” position that remains open to the possibility of noncessationism. All it takes for a local church or a Christian college or seminary to become totally noncessationist is for the leadership to become “charismatic sympathizers.” Recent evangelical history has taught that. An institution does not have to be noncessationist to move in that direction. All it has to do is to have “Open But Cautious” leaders, members, or students, and over time, noncessationism will leave its mark on that body.<sup>3</sup>

That says it well. What have been dubbed “the three waves of the Spirit” result in extremely serious theological and practical consequences. One quick example involves the plethora of terms that are used without *any* biblical support whatsoever: “the baptism *of* the Holy Spirit”; “latter rain”; “a second work of grace”; “slaying in the spirit”; “new revelation”; and others. These movements are characterized by flawed hermeneutics and non-existent exegesis. To compromise with them in any way is to invite theological chaos and ecclesiastical disaster.

The purpose of this article, then, is to take a look at some history. We have today a mass of teachers running around claiming all kinds of things, but at the very heart of it all is a claim to new revelation. In fact, from the original founder of Pentecostalism (**Charles Fox Parham**, 1873–1929) right up today’s “name it and claim it” teachers and “signs and wonders” gurus, the consistent claim has *always* been “new revelation,” which renders Scripture a secondary consideration.

It is significant, indeed, that even in the days of **Charles Spurgeon** (1834–1892), there were what he called “fanatics” who claimed new revelation. That is strong language, indeed, coming from the Prince of Preachers, but with good reason. Here is what he had to say about it in a sermon he preached early in his ministry in 1855:

I have heard many fanatical persons say the Holy Spirit revealed this and that to them. Now that is very

generally revealed nonsense. The Holy Ghost does not reveal anything fresh now. He brings old things to our remembrance. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have told you" [John 14:26]. The canon of revelation is closed; there is no more to be added. God does not give a fresh revelation, but he rivets the old one. . . . If [you lived longer than] Methusaleh, there would be no need for a fresh revelation; . . . there would be no necessity for the addition of a single word.<sup>4</sup>

Some 17 years later, Spurgeon's conviction had not changed, as he preached in 1872:

I have seen the Spirit of God shamefully dishonored by persons—I hope they were insane—who have said that they have had this and that revealed to them. There has not, for some years, passed over my head a single week in which I have not been pestered with the revelations of hypocrites or maniacs. Semi-lunatics are very fond of coming with messages from the Lord to me and it may save them some trouble if I tell them once and for all that I will have none of their stupid messages.

Never dream that events are revealed to you by Heaven, or you may come to be like those idiots who dare impute their blatant follies to the Holy Spirit. If you feel your tongue itch to talk nonsense, trace it to the devil, not to the Spirit of God! Whatever is to be revealed by the Spirit to any of us is in the Word of God already—He adds nothing to the Bible, and never will. Let persons who have revelations of this, that, and the other, go to bed and wake up in their senses. I only wish they would follow the advice and no longer insult the Holy Spirit by laying their nonsense at His door.<sup>5</sup>

There is no doubt that Spurgeon's view was that of cessationism because it alone defends the Bible as sufficient.

If there is still doubt in our minds, we need only come face-to-face with the undeniable, irrefutable, and demonstrable fact that ***cessationism is the historical position of orthodox Christianity*** (please read that again). Like many other movements throughout recent history, this kind of teaching likewise abandons our historic Faith. Not only does Spurgeon's orthodoxy illustrate this, but it is equally verifiable in a long legacy of godly men. During my research I was a little astounded myself at the sheer weight of the evidence. Here are just a few examples, starting with the most recent and going back in time.

One of the most influential servants of God in my own ministry was **D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones** (1899–1981), 30-year pastor of Westminster Chapel in London and successor of G. Campbell Morgan. His expositions of Romans, and especially Ephesians, are unequalled. In my humble opinion, however, his otherwise stellar teaching was marred by his weakness on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. With the deepest respect, I must say that his muddled (sometimes almost mystical) views on sealing, indwelling, infilling, and baptism (*God's Ultimate Purpose*, pp. 243–311 and other works) opened the door wide for errant charismatic teaching. It's undoubtedly significant that soon after his departure from Westminster, that church went the way of the Vineyard Movement. But,

even with that weakness, Lloyd-Jones was unwavering on the sufficiency of Scripture and the impossibility of new revelation, as well as the so-called office of prophet, all of which are claimed by all three "waves" of charismatic teaching. While charismatics have claimed that he was sympathetic with their views and was actually a continuationist, they have either *misread* him or not read *enough* of him. He did *not* advocate their views. We quote at some length here out of necessity:

A prophet was a person to whom truth was imparted by the Holy Spirit. . . . A revelation or message or some insight into truth came to them, and, filled with the Spirit, they were able to make utterances which were of benefit and profit to the Church. Surely it is clear that this again was temporary, and for this good reason, that in those early days of the Church there were no New Testament Scriptures, the Truth had not yet been expounded in written words.

Try to imagine our position if we did not possess these New Testament Epistles, but the Old Testament only. That was the position of the early Church. Truth was imparted to it primarily by the teaching and preaching of the apostles, but that was supplemented by the teaching of the prophets to whom truth was given and also the ability to speak it with clarity and power in the demonstration and authority of the Spirit.

But once these New Testament documents were written the office of a prophet was no longer necessary. Hence in the Pastoral Epistles which apply to a later stage in the history of the Church, when things had become more settled and fixed, there is no mention of the prophets. It is clear that even by then the office of the prophet was no longer necessary, and the call was for teachers and pastors and others to expound the Scriptures and to convey the knowledge of the truth.

Again, we must note that often in the history of the Church trouble has arisen because people thought that they were prophets in the New Testament sense, and that they had received special revelations of truth. The answer to that is that in view of the New Testament Scriptures there is no need of further truth. That is an absolute proposition. We have all truth in the New Testament, and we have no need of any further revelations. All has been given, everything that is necessary for us is available. Therefore if a man claims to have received a revelation of some fresh truth we should suspect him immediately. . . .

The answer to all this is that the need for prophets ends once we have the canon of the New Testament. We no longer need direct revelations of truth; the truth is in the Bible. We must never separate the Spirit and the Word. The Spirit speaks to us through the Word; so we should always doubt and query any supposed revelation that is not entirely consistent with the Word of God. Indeed the essence of wisdom is to reject altogether the term "revelation" as far as we are concerned, and speak only of "illumination." The revelation has been given once and for all, and what we need and what by the grace of God we can have, and do have, is illumi-

nation by the Spirit to understand the Word.<sup>6</sup>

It has been said, as biographer Richard Belcher submits, that **A. W. Pink** (1886–1952) was “born to write.” Well, Pink certainly understood that his writing did not come from new revelation. He recognized that as the offices of apostles and prophets were extraordinary, “so there were gifts extraordinary,” and since

we no longer have the apostles with us and the supernatural gifts (the communication of which was an essential part of “the signs of an apostle,” 2 Cor. 12:12) are absent. . . . Surely it is a manifest absurdity, then, to take a chapter which was given for the express purpose of regulating the exercise of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and apply it to a company today where none of those gifts exist.<sup>7</sup>

The renowned theologian **B. B. Warfield** (1851–1921) wrote that the sign “gifts were . . . distinctively the authentication of the apostles. They were part of the credentials of the apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church. Their function thus confirmed them to distinctively the apostolic church and they necessarily passed away with it.”<sup>8</sup> Another great theologian, **William G. T. Shedd** (1820–94), powerfully observes that what is done, is done:

The supernatural gifts of inspiration and miracles which the apostles possessed were not continued to their ministerial successors, because they were no longer necessary. All the doctrines of Christianity had been revealed to the apostles, and had been delivered to the church in a written form. There was no further need of an infallible inspiration. And the credentials and authority given to the first preachers of Christianity in miraculous acts, did not need continual repetition from age to age. One age of miracles well authenticated is sufficient to establish the divine origin of the gospel. In a human court, an indefinite series of witnesses is not required. “By the mouth of two or three witnesses,” the facts are established. The case once decided is not reopened.<sup>9</sup>

Neither was there any doubt in the mind of **George Smeaton** (1814–1899) that while the “extraordinary gifts” were

wholly distinct from the ordinary sanctifying or ministerial gifts which continue in the Church through out all her history. The supernatural or extraordinary gifts were temporary, and intended to disappear when the Church should be founded and the inspired Canon of Scripture closed; for they were an external proof of an internal inspiration.<sup>10</sup>

Likewise, another great theologian, **Robert L. Dabney** (1820–1898), wrote:

It was to sustain the testimony of the twelve that the signs were needed. But the necessity was temporary. . . . The civilized world was now dotted over with churches. . . . Mankind now had the completed Scriptures, with all their self-evidencing light, and the witness of the Spirit in the called was complete. . . . The same necessity for supernatural signs now no longer

existed, and God, who is never wasteful in His expedients, withdrew them. Henceforward the church was to conquer the belief of the world by its example and teaching alone, energized by the illumination of the Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup>

**James Buchanan** (1804–1870) likewise observed:

The miraculous gifts of the Spirit have long since been withdrawn. They were used for a temporary purpose. They were the scaffolding which God employed for the erection of a spiritual temple. When it was no longer needed the scaffolding was taken down, but the temple still stands, and is occupied by his indwelling Spirit.<sup>12</sup>

Going back further, the Puritans are powerful examples. In his major work on the gifts, **John Owen** (1616–1683) wrote: “the gifts of miracles and tongues . . . were bestowed on the apostles and many of the first converts. [But] that dispensation of the Spirit is long since ceased, and where it is now pretended unto by any, it may justly be suspected as an enthusiastic delusion.”<sup>13</sup> **Thomas Watson** (1620–1686) agreed that the “extraordinary gifts in the church are now ceased,”<sup>14</sup> as did **John Gill** (1697–1771), who pointed out that not all had these gifts then “and now there are none that are possessed of [them].”<sup>15</sup> **George Whitefield** (1714–1770) concurred as well: “The *karismata*, the miraculous gifts conferred on the primitive church . . . have long ceased.”<sup>16</sup> The beloved **Matthew Henry** (1662–1714) was equally bold. Speaking of the “gift of tongues,” he wrote:

These and other gifts of prophecy, being a sign, have long since ceased and been laid aside, and we have no encouragement to expect the revival of them; but, on the contrary, are directed to call the Scriptures the more sure word of prophecy, more sure than voices from Heaven; and to them we are directed to take heed, to search them, and to hold them fast.<sup>17</sup>

One of the greatest theological minds in history, **Jonathan Edwards** (1703–1758), also agreed:

The extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, such as the gift of tongues, of miracles, of prophecy, &c, are called extraordinary, because they are such as are not given in the ordinary course of God’s providence. They are not bestowed in the way of God’s ordinary providential dealing with his children, but only on extraordinary occasions, as they were bestowed on the Prophets and Apostles to enable them to reveal the mind and will of God before the canon of Scripture was complete, and so on the primitive church, in order to the founding and establishing of it in the world. But since the canon of the Scripture has been completed, and the Christian church fully founded and established, these extraordinary gifts have ceased.<sup>18</sup>

We should also note that both the *Westminster Confession* and the *London Baptist* of 1689 state the biblical teaching with no ambiguity or compromise:

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. (1.6)

Going back even further, in their frantic attempt to prop up their sagging edifice, some charismatics actually speculate that **John Calvin** (1509–1564) might have spoken in tongues. Such misreading of the great Reformer—assuming they actually read him at all—is so ludicrous that it barely deserves comment. In discussing spiritual gifts in his *Institutes*, in fact, tongues being among them (1 Cor. 12:28), Calvin wrote: “As to those which were temporary, I say nothing for it is not worth while to dwell upon them.”<sup>19</sup> *Temporary*, of course, is the key word. Calvin recognized that the sign gifts had ceased simply because it is unambiguously obvious in Scripture and history. If Calvin’s view is not clear enough, a little later he writes: “The gift of healing disappeared with the other miraculous powers which the Lord was pleased to give for a time, that it might render the new preaching of the gospel for ever wonderful.”<sup>20</sup> We could cite several other statements by Calvin, but we will mention just one more. In his commentary on Acts 10:44, he not only writes, “The gift of the tongues, and other such like things, are ceased long ago in the Church,” but he goes on to rebuke certain ones of his own day (Libertines and certain Anabaptists)—as we should be doing in our own day—by adding:

But the spirit of understanding and of regeneration is of force, and shall always be of force, which the Lord coupleth with the external preaching of the gospel, that he may keep us in reverence of his word, and may prevent the deadly dotings, wherein brain-sick fellows enwrap themselves, whilst that, forsaking the word, they invent an erroneous and wandering spirit.<sup>21</sup>

Taking another step back, and in his characteristic plain spoken way, **Martin Luther** (1483–1546) wrote what could have been (and should be) penned today: “Whenever you hear anyone boast that he has something by inspiration of the Holy Spirit and it has no basis in God’s Word, no matter what it may be, tell him that this is the work of the devil.”<sup>22</sup>

Even in the early centuries after the Apostolic Age, the temporary nature of the sign gifts was recognized as obvious by orthodox teachers. **Augustine** (354–407) said that tongues (known languages) “were signs adapted to the time . . . to show that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues [languages] over the whole earth. That thing was done for a sign, and it passed away.”<sup>23</sup> And finally, note the use of the operative word “cessation” by the great 4<sup>th</sup>-century expositor **John Chrysostom** (c.344–407): “This whole place [1 Cor. 12] is very obscure: but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place.”<sup>24</sup>

In light of that staggering legacy, are we to actually think that those men—men of the highest biblical and historical knowledge, as well as impeccable spiritual character—were all wrong? Are we to think instead that the lunacy

that continues to spew forth from morally questionable, self-proclaimed “teachers” as Kenneth Copeland, Paul Crouch, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Hagen, Benny Hinn, T.D. Jakes, Joyce Meyer, and a whole cadre of others is actually from God?

So, we say again with full biblical confidence, and without apology, any noncessation viewpoint is *not biblical, historical Christianity*. We ignore this incontrovertible fact at great peril, because when we do, we have abandoned the sufficiency of Scripture, and *that*, my Dear Christian Friend, is what this entire issue is about. *Everything either rises or falls on one’s view of Scripture—period*. Mark it down: to deny the sufficiency of Scripture in its entirety is to defend apostasy in its blasphemy.

Dr. J. D. Watson  
Pastor-Teacher

## NOTES

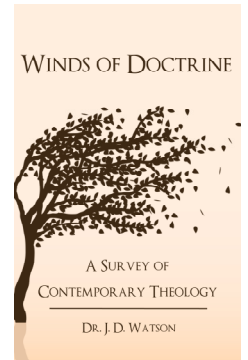
- <sup>1</sup> See chapter 4, “Temporary Spiritual Gifts,” in the author’s *Truth On Tough Texts*, (Sola Scriptura Publications, 2012), 33–46 (original TOTTT articles 3 and 4; Oct. & Nov. 2005).
- <sup>2</sup> This article is taken from the author’s most recent book, *Winds of Doctrine: A Survey of Contemporary Theology* (see the description later in this issue).
- <sup>3</sup> Edgar Thomas, “The Hermeneutics Of Noncessationism” (Banner of Truth), 1975,
- <sup>4</sup> “The Comforter,” *New Park Street Pulpit*, (Baker, 1990, reprinted from 1855 original), Vol. I, 38.
- <sup>5</sup> “The Paraclete,” *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol. 18, 563.
- <sup>6</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Christian Unity* (Baker, 1987), 189–90.
- <sup>7</sup> A. W. Pink, *Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. XVI, No. 10, October 1937, 319.
- <sup>8</sup> B. B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (Scribner’s, 1918), 6.
- <sup>9</sup> William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology* (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1891), Vol II, 369.
- <sup>10</sup> George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (T.&T. Clark, 1882), 51.
- <sup>11</sup> Robert L. Dabney, “Prelacy a Blunder,” in *Discussions of R. L. Dabney* (Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1891), Vol. 2, 236–237.
- <sup>12</sup> James Buchanan, *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit* (Robert Carter, 1847), 67.
- <sup>13</sup> *The Works of John Owen*, Vol. 4, *A Discourse of Spiritual Gifts*, II.1.
- <sup>14</sup> Thomas Watson, *The Beatitudes* (Banner of Truth, 1994 reprint of 1660 original), 14.
- <sup>15</sup> John Gill, *Exposition of the Entire Bible*, comment on 1 Cor. 12:29.
- <sup>16</sup> George Whitefield, *Works*, Vol. IV, 167.
- <sup>17</sup> Matthew Henry, Preface to Vol. IV of his *Exposition of the OT and NT*, vii.
- <sup>18</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *Charity and its Fruits*, (Robert Carter, 185), 442–43.
- <sup>19</sup> *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Beveridge translation), IV.3.8.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, IV.19.18.
- <sup>21</sup> John Calvin, *Commentaries*, Acts 10:24.
- <sup>22</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works* (ed. Jaroslav Pelikan), Vol. 23 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), 173–74.
- <sup>23</sup> *Homilies on the First of John*, 6.10 (1 John 3:19–4:3).
- <sup>24</sup> *The Homilies of John Chrysostom on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (ed. John Keble) (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1845), Homily 29, 395.

# BOOKS FOR GOD'S GLORY AND BELIEVER'S GROWTH

## NEW RELEASE

### *Winds of Doctrine: A Survey of Contemporary Theology*

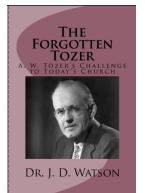
**C**ontemporary Theology is generally defined as a study of theology and theological trends from post-World War I to the present. This 174-page book champions historical Christianity and the sufficiency of Scripture against aberrant theologies of the modern day. It addresses: Fundamentalism, Evangelicalism, Neo-orthodoxy, Neo-Liberalism, Pentecostalism, the Charismatic Movement, the Vineyard Movement, Post-Vatican II Catholicism, Secular Theology, Theology of Hope, Liberation Theology, Process Theology, The Jesus Seminar, Feminist Theology, Theologies of Success, Theologies of Eschatology, the New Age Movement, Postmodernism, and the Emerging Church. The purpose of this small volume, which was originally a series of lectures delivered at the Haiti Bible Institute in October of 2013, is simply to introduce this subject matter, not be an exhaustive treatment. Hopefully, it will both serve as a primer for those who want only the basics and also serve as a solid foundation on which to build for those who want to go deeper in such discerning studies. Special emphasis is placed on the fact that most contemporary theologies have an extremely low view of Scripture, which is repeatedly demonstrated in each topic of study. [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]



## RECENT RELEASE

### *The Forgotten Tozer: A. W. Tozer's Challenge to Today's Church*

**L**IKE many other Christians, the author became acquainted with A. W. Tozer through his classic book, *The Knowledge of the Holy*. Other than that classic work, however, he had read almost nothing else of Tozer until about 1998. It was then that someone handed him a copy of *God Tells the Man Who Cares*. He was astounded to learn that decades ago Tozer faced and addressed most of the same issues that are diluting Christianity and undermining the Church today. A year of research and writing resulted in the present book. While it contains some biographical material, it is not a biography. Citing more than 200 extensive and carefully documented Tozer quotations, it is a review and analysis of Tozer's thought on contemporary Christianity of his day (and as it turns out, our own as well). (186 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]



## OTHER TITLES

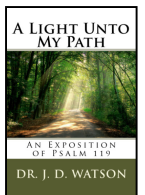
### *A Taste of Heaven on Earth: Marriage and Family in Ephesians 5:18-6:4*

**T**HIS 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]



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

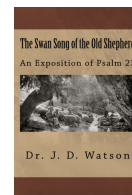
**P**ART of the incomprehensible miracle of inspiration is that God used the personality, experiences, and even words of each Scripture writer so that the result was not only what the *writer* wanted to say but also exactly what *God* wanted to say. There is no better example of this than in the Psalms. 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.]





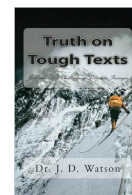
## ***The Swan Song of the Old Shepherd: An Exposition of Psalm 23***

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'iy*), 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.]



## ***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. 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.]



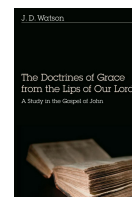
## ***Upon This Rock: Studies in Church History and Their Application***

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. As noted 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]



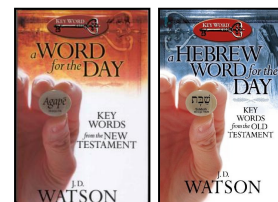
## ***The Doctrines of Grace from the Lips of Our Lord: A Study in the Gospel of John***

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>]



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

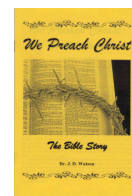
THESE books demonstrate the richness of some of the Greek words used in the New Testament and Hebrew words in the Old Testament and to help make them practical for Christian living. Since words matter, the words of Scripture matter most. And in a day when words don't seem to mean much, the need for precision 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).]

### ***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 included with every order. The MP3 of this message is also on our website.]



***Please see our new blog for more information about all our titles, including more about content and sample chapters: <http://SolaScripturaPublications.blogspot.com/>***

## **SOLA SCRIPTURA PUBLICATIONS**

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

### **Order Form<sup>\*</sup>**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email (optional)** \_\_\_\_\_

Qty.	Title	Price Each	Total Price
1	We Preach Christ: The Bible Story	FREE	FREE <sup>†</sup>
<b>Sub-Total</b>			
<b><i>Entirely Optional Shipping Donation</i></b>			
<b>TOTAL<sup>‡</sup></b>			<b>\$</b>

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

<sup>\*</sup> 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.

<sup>†</sup> One FREE copy with any order of at least one other book title. Additional copies may be purchased.

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

## BLOGS

**NEW:** *Sola Scriptura Publications:* Info and ordering [Sola Scriptura Publications](#)

*Tas Membranas: A Blog for Sound, Solid, and Scriptural Books* [Tas-Membranas.blogspot.com](#)

*Expositing Ephesians: The Christian's Wealth and Walk* [ExpositingEphesians.blogspot.com](#)

### OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

*John Calvin for Today* [JohnCalvinForToday.blogspot.com](#);

*Christ in Community* [ChristInCommunity.org/](#)

## TRUTH ON TOUGH TEXTS

A Ministry of  
Grace Bible Church  
P.O. Box 235  
Meeker, CO 81641  
[www.TheScriptureAlone.com](#)  
[sspmail1521@gmail.com](mailto: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, donations will be greatly appreciated, but never demanded. If you know someone you think would enjoy TOTT, please send along their address.