

# Truth Topics • Knowing what you believe and why (Part 1)

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When we started last month with this series, this truth topic series, we spent time laying out some reasons for faith. And we started off talking about how, well, we asked the question, How can I know the Bible is Reliable?

## TRUTH TOPICS

- How can I know the Bible is reliable?
- Responding to misconceptions about the Bible
- Why is the Creation story important?
- Responding to Evolution

And we went through talking about all the aspects of our faith in frankly, the Word of God and how God has given us the evidence that it is in fact His Word.

Then we spent about 3 weeks really talking about attacks on our Christian faith and how to deal with those.

## TRUTH TOPICS

- How can I know the Bible is reliable?
- Responding to misconceptions about the Bible
- Why is the Creation story important?
- Responding to Evolution

You'll remember we spent a week on responding to common misconceptions and also objections about both the Bible and our Christian faith.

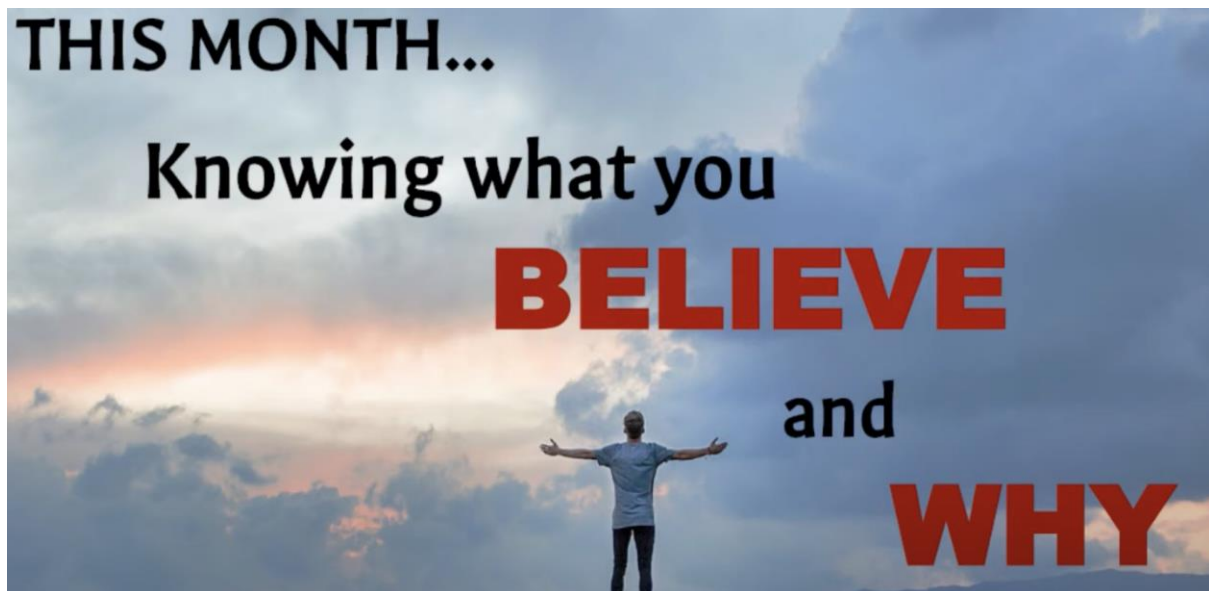
We dealt with, a week on why the Book of Genesis and particularly the creation story is so key to our understanding of the nature of God and the plan of redemption. And why it's important to take a literal view of those passages in the Bible.

## TRUTH TOPICS

- How can I know the Bible is reliable?
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- Why is the Creation story important?
- Responding to Evolution

And then we ended the month of June by asking the question, then how should Christians respond to the voice of evolution and belief in evolution? And we, we dealt with those things.

And so we kind of laid a foundation, at least for moving on so that we can go on here in July. And this month we're going to be, under a truth topic series dealing with,



Knowing what you Believe and Why.

And we're going to be laying that foundation of the specifics of, as Christians, what are the key aspects? What are the pillars of our faith? And these are the very things that are under attack in our culture today. The very bedrock of our Christian faith.

We're going to go through each of these points over the month of July. And tonight, we're going to deal with 3 different topics.

# TONIGHT...

- **The Bible**
- **The Nature of God**
- **The Nature and work of Christ**



We're going to deal with The Bible, and so just a little bit of review from how we know the Bible is reliable, although we'll touch on some other things there.

We're going to deal with also The Nature of God. Boy, believe me, I could spend a whole summer just talking to you about the nature of God. We're going to squeeze it in amidst these other topics tonight.

And then we're going to talk about The Nature and the work of Christ. We're going to be laying these things out in the form of truth claims, which churches often refer to as a statement of faith.

Now, I'm assuming that most of you have probably read the Statement Of Faith that we have here at Calvary Chapel, Ontario. And it's something that we have very prominently put on our website. We've got written literature in the Info Center that goes over those things. It's written in other pieces of literature and so forth.

The Statement of Faith is essentially our declaration as a church, this is what we believe. I don't think probably as many people read it as should, more than likely. Often we make decisions on what church to attend based on other criteria. Music, style of preaching, that sort of thing.

But one of the things that should concern us a great deal is the question, what do these people believe? What is the bedrock of truth that they are laying claim to?

And I want to just emphasize that a statement of faith isn't the whole story because it's possible to make a statement of faith and then not really hold to it.

I grew up in a church that had a very Orthodox statement of faith. And by Orthodox, that word basically just means, true to the scriptures. The statement of faith was beautiful but never taught it. We recited it on Sunday morning but I don't remember that the aspects of that statement of faith really ever being affirmed or taught in Sunday school classes, and it certainly wasn't taught over the pulpit.

We were hearing things over the pulpit, like how to be kind and how to be a good citizen in the United States of America and things like that. The gospel was missing. It was in the statement of faith, but it was missing everywhere else. So when I suggest to you that it's important to look at a church's statement of faith, I'm not suggesting that's the only thing. You need to see that played out, walked out, lived out in what the church is talking about, living, teaching about, and so forth.

Let's go ahead and put the first one of these up on the screen. And again, these are going to be made up as truth statements. The first statement is,

I believe the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God.

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And that's a little bit of a mouthful. But as you can see from that statement, there are 3 key words, and I'll highlight them here for you in red so that you can see them.

I believe the Bible is the **inspired** and only **infallible** and **authoritative** written Word of God.

What we're saying here as a church, and I believe that these are true statements, and I think that they're the bedrock of what we believe as Christians. We're saying that we believe the Bible is first of all, inspired. Second of all, we're saying that it's infallible. And thirdly, we're saying that it's authoritative.

Now we covered the first aspect of inspiration in our very first study, How Can I Know the Bible is Reliable? We dealt with the issue of biblical inspiration. I'll

just remind you that this is expressed probably best in 1 Timothy, or excuse me, 2 Timothy, chapter 3, verse 16. It says,

**2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)**

*All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

*All scripture is God-breathed and (therefore) is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

In fact, because it's God breathed, it's the truth. And essentially that's what that idea. In fact, I love that, and that's why I quoted that out of the NIV. I like that term, “*God-breathed.*” I think some of the other translations literally say, *breathed out by God*, which is just as, it's saying the same thing. But I just like that term, “*God-breathed.*” The scripture is God-breathed.

If that is a little bit fuzzy in your mind as far as how that applies to scripture, then 2 Peter is another passage that we looked at that said,

**2 Peter 1:21 (ESV)**

*For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

*For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

Now we have a different term that describes biblical inspiration. First it's “*God-breathed,*” now it's, then it's “*carried along.*” People were carried when they were... And basically what we're saying, and I'm assuming that if you're having a conversation with someone and they say to you, so the Bible, you like, believe in the Bible, right? And by the way, that's a weird question, if you've ever gotten that, to say, you... But that's the way somebody's probably going to say it. So you believe in the Bible?

And my response is usually, well, I believe in God who gave the Bible. And specifically, I believe the Bible is God's Word. And they'll, yeah, that's what I mean, that's what I mean. Okay. Now we can talk about it. So what exactly, when you say you believe it's God's Word, what do you mean?

Well, I believe that God super intended the process of the writing of the Bible by those who wrote it so that we can say these people were carried along and

God breathed into their lives, the specifics and wisdom and information that they conveyed and wrote down and recorded in the Bible. That's what I believe. That is the essence of biblical inspiration. They were carried along by God. He directed the whole process. Since we covered inspiration before, I won't say anything more about it.

I believe the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God.

Let's look at the next word and that's infallible.

Now, if you were raised Roman Catholic, you were raised believing the Pope was infallible. This word was applied to the Pope. And that's a challenge because my Bible says, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) And that rules out infallibility for any of us. The Pope included. That's my personal opinion. I'm not saying that to diss Roman Catholicism. I'm simply saying, I don't think that idea squares with the Bible.

The Bible, in fact, we believe to be infallible. What are we saying when we say it's infallible? We are saying that insofar as God breathed into the biblical writers and carried them along, okay, we're describing inspiration, that in those original writings by those original writers, that what they wrote is correct. There are no mistakes. It is not wrong. It is true.

But please understand something, people, we do not believe infallibility applies to specific translations of the Bible. Translations are done by men. The writings and that's, of course, one of the things that you'll hear about the Bible. Well, wasn't it just written by men?

Yes, it was, but God superintended the process in a supernatural way, as we see in those two previous Scriptures. He breathed into those individuals and carried them along. All right.

That's not true of the translation committees. Those people worked hard. They learned languages. They learned to read and write the original languages of Hebrew, and Greek, and Aramaic, which there's a smattering of Aramaic.

I believe the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God.

These translations came about through men and women who were devoted to the study of those original languages and the interpretation and translation of the

original writings into the various language in which they've been brought. We do not believe infallibility applies to translations.

In other words, I don't believe the ESV is infallible. I don't believe the NIV, or the NASB, or the King James, or the New King James or... And I'm just citing some modern translations except for the King James. Of course, that's 400 years old, but infallibility doesn't extend to translations. It refers to what we call the original autographs. And don't think of an autograph as like a John Hancock. The original autographs is a term that describes the original documents, the original writings.

God superintended, He came upon the person who wrote those things down. And through the course of that process of inspiration, those original writings are infallible.

We fully recognize that in the transmission process of the Scriptures over the years, there have been some changes. There have been minor changes and I want to emphasize that. Minor changes. There is no evidence that the meaning or clarity of the message of the Scripture has been altered in any way, okay, from any of the changes that have taken place. It's so easy to prove changes. Good grief.

When I study for teaching on a Sunday morning or even a Wednesday night, I have a computer program, a Bible program that I bring up on my laptop, and I will have Bible translations side by side in that program. I've got the ESV, and the NASB, and the New King James, and the King James, and the NIV. I've got, basically all the modern translation and I can go back and forth just with the click of the mouse and look, and that's why I'm able to say to you on a Sunday, your Bible may say da, da, da, because I've read it that way. I see the changes. I see the differences in wording. I see some of the...

Different Bibles actually access different manuscript evidence in some cases so they're going to come up with differences of wording and that sort of thing. Even though those things exist, there is no difference in the message. It is unchanged. Does that make sense? Nothing of doctrinal importance is in any way in question.

I believe the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and **authoritative** written Word of God.

And then the last word we're going to focus on here is this word **authoritative**.

And frankly, this word should be very important to you as a believer, because the word basically means, it's describing something that carries authority. And when we see a truth claim expressed in the Word of God, we believe it. Why? Because we believe it's from God, right? If, you know what I mean?

If I'm reading something in Reader's Digest, don't ask me why I said that, I don't read Reader's Digest. Do they even still print Reader's Digest? If I'm reading something in another book and there's a claim that is made that they're saying is true, my immediate response is going to be, oh, that's interesting. Wonder where they got that?

Have you had somebody say something to you that they were just passionate about, and they're explaining it to you, and you're thinking to yourself, that's really interesting, where did you come up with that?

Dwayne, you might remember, we were out at the prison last Saturday night and there's one of the guys and we're chatting and talking back and forth. And I didn't confront the guy, but one of the guys was just explaining all these things about the soul. (Pastor Paul is showing intercepting hand movements) And he was using his hand, talking about there's a third of this, and a two thirds of that, and you put them together and you get the whole soul.

And I was nodding and saying, that's very interesting. But inside, of course, what I'm saying is, where'd you come up with that? Because that isn't in the Bible. Okay. That's what we're referring to when we talk about authority. Anybody can say anything, but the question is, where did you get it? And that's what we should be asking people.

I remember a number of years ago, I had a gal, young gal say to me, just right off the top, I told her I was a pastor. And she said, well, I just want you to know, I believe in reincarnation. And I was like, okay, fine, where'd you come up with that? I mean, why do you believe in reincarnation? What evidence, what authority tells you that we are reincarnated?

Because I said to her, here's the point about reincarnation. The Bible doesn't support it. In fact, and then I challenged her and I said, if I can show you that the Bible teaches against reincarnation, would you believe it? She said, well, I think so. I always try to, I kind of trap people sometimes.

I'll say, when we get to talking, I'll ask him a question. I'll say, do you believe the Bible is God's Word? Yeah. Okay. Now I got them, see. They're dead. So now they make a statement like, I believe in reincarnation, and I say, whoa, you



got a problem now see, because you told me that you believe that the Bible is God's Word. Now you said you believe in reincarnation. I can show you where the Bible says, it is appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27) See, that blows reincarnation out of the water. And that's the authority of God's Word.

Now I'll come back and say, now you tell me your authority for saying that you believe in reincarnation. And it comes up to some new age hoo-hah that I heard about. I read about, and gee, there was this guy. There was this one magazine article, and this one guy, and he thought, and he believed, and he just knew things that he shouldn't have known otherwise, and it was probably his past life. And they're guessing is the bottom line. And so that's where authority largely comes from in the world where they're making truth statements, I believe though, we'll say.

Just as much as you and I will say, I believe the Bible is authoritative. They'll say I believe in reincarnation. Well, you and I believe these things for various reasons. They believe their things for various reasons.

The question comes down to authority. What is your authority for believing what you believe? Don't be afraid to ask people that question, but be prepared to extend also your authority.

Here's the point, you guys. Do you understand that when the world talks about things, like, makes truth claims. When your coworkers, and friends, and family, and whatever else are in the lunch, in the break room and some topic comes up about death, or heaven, or hell, or God, or Satan, or whatever. Life after death. People are going to say things and they're going to just make, they're going to make claims. They're going to make claims of truth and it's just going to come out. And other people are just going to go, oh because in the world today, everybody's got an opinion and we all, and we basically, we think it's rude these days to say that we disagree with anybody. We'll just say, well, I guess that's true for you, which is the dumbest thing in the world. But that's okay. Don't say that.

But the point is, they have an expectation that you have an opinion. Okay. They have an..., they've got an opinion. They have an expectation you probably have an opinion too.

If you don't express your authority for what you believe, what you've done is you've shared an opinion, just like their opinion and it hasn't changed anything.

Hasn't changed any minds. It hasn't gone anywhere because we were just expressing our opinions.

Christians, we don't give opinions. We don't add to conversations by saying, my opinion is. We make truth claims predicated on the authority of God's Word. And we come out and we say, well, that's interesting, what you're saying here. Did you know that the Bible says.

Now, they got a problem with the Bible, that's their problem, that's their issue. You can't solve all their issues but what you can do is you can say, this is why I believe what I believe, right? It's because it's in the Bible and the Bible carries authority. Okay. This is a very important thing and I think that we as Christians need to be really, we really need to understand the importance of authority.

Let's move on to our next Truth claim, shall we?

I believe there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Distinguishable but invisible.
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I believe there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Distinguishable but invisible.

This basically says that we believe, you believe, in the Trinity. Be careful though when you use that word because some people will object to that word. And one of the most challenging things about the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is this. There is no way to perfectly or completely understand it or explain it. I mean, I've heard some really good explanations.

The best one was by C.S. Lewis in Mere Christianity, blew me out of the water, but even that isn't perfect because how are you going to explain God, the very nature of God? How are you going to put it? How are you going to put in human words that which is not human, that which is other than what you and I know in our day to day life?

That's what makes the Trinity so difficult for many people. They can't understand it and because intellectually they can't wrap their mind around it, pride says, now I'm going to kick it to the curb because you see, I can't understand it. I've had people literally tell me that. So why don't you believe in the Trinity? Because I can't get it. I can't understand it. You know what you've just done? You have exalted your intellect above the authority of God's Word. If I can't understand it, I'm not going to accept it. I will only accept what I can

comprehend. Do you see the folly and the arrogance that is found in that sort of a statement?

There are so many things about God that you and I just can't get and the Trinity is one of them. Some of the people who don't like the idea and who, because of the pride, decide to kick it out, will make excuses why they won't believe in the Trinity. They'll come up with things like, well, you know the word Trinity isn't in the Bible. And that's one of the reasons I don't believe in the Trinity, it's not in the Bible.

That's not a hard thing to answer. Just tell them that Christmas isn't in the Bible either but the Bible talks about the fact that Jesus was born just outside of Bethlehem. And there were angels, and there were shepherds, and He was placed in a manger, and all that stuff that goes along with Christmas. And the word Easter isn't in the Bible, but Jesus was raised from the dead. And the word rapture isn't in the Bible but we're going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. You see what I'm saying?

When we start getting, when you start having problems with specific words, we've lost sight of what's really important, and that is does the Bible Teach about this? Forget the word Trinity. And that's what you can challenge somebody with. Just say, okay, forget it. Okay, great. Let's throw the word Trinity out. Now, does the Bible teach what the Trinity though says, and that's what we're going to kind of look at here a little bit.

The important thing to ask, is the idea of the Trinity in the Bible? Well, first of all, the fact that there is one God is clear from the Word. It's from Deuteronomy chapter 6:4.

**Deuteronomy 6:4 (ESV)**

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

Now, that's where the Trinity begins. There is, we believe there's one God. We believe in one GOD. We don't believe in three Gods. We believe in one God. And that concept is repeated in the New Testament. Paul repeats it. There is one God, right? And one mediator between God and man, and so forth. (1 Timothy 2:5) Okay? The Trinity is not a belief in a multiplicity of Gods.

However, what the Trinity teaches us is that there are three Persons who make up that one God. We have in the Bible revealed, God the Father, or He who is

called the Father, who is a Person, who is called God. We have the Holy Spirit who is a Person and not a force, alone, who is called God. And we have Jesus, the Son, who is a Person, and who is called God. And there you have the Trinity.

And then you have several references within the context of the New Testament. Look at Matthew, chapter 28, verse 19.

**Matthew 28:19 (ESV)**

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, (Jesus is speaking here) baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

And by the way, “*in the name of*” is an ancient way of saying, in the authority of. Go and do this in the authority of God. But notice the authority is listed as God, “*the Father,*” God, “*the Son,*” and God, “*the Holy Spirit.*”

And then you have 2 Corinthians chapter 13, verse 14.

**2 Corinthians 13:14 (ESV)**

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

A trinitarian sort of an idea there of blessing. And then 1 Peter chapter 1.

**1 Peter 1:2 (ESV)**

*...according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.*

*...according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.*

Again, you have the three Persons of the Trinity who are mentioned over and over.

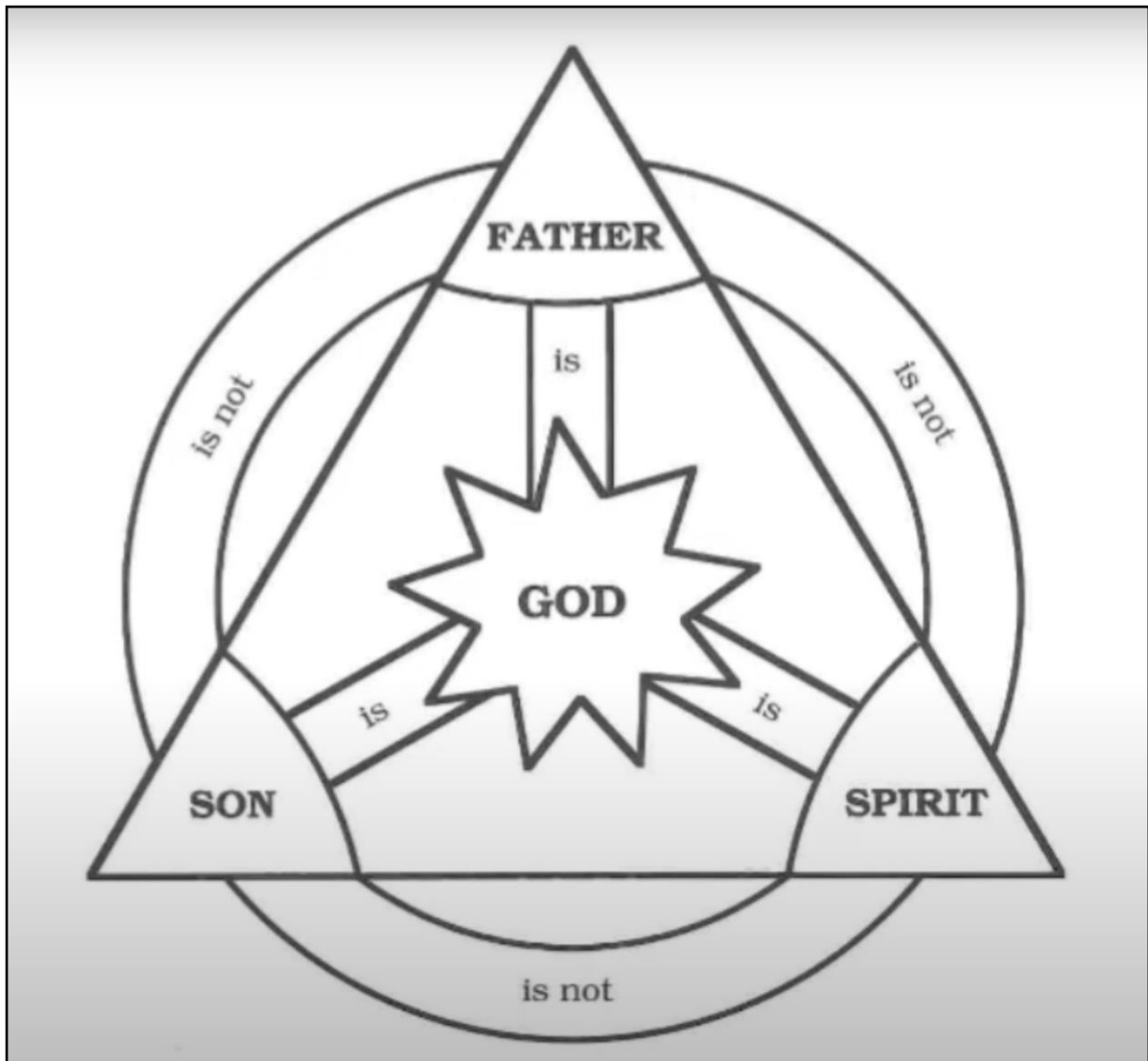
Now, what's interesting is that in the Old Testament, and we're not going to quote these for you, but in the Old Testament, you have what we call allusions to, inferences of the Trinitarian idea although it's not fully revealed in the Old Testament. You have passages you can't explain outside of a Trinitarian understanding.

For example when you come to Genesis and the creation of man, you hear God talking and what is He saying? He says, "*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*" (Genesis 1:26) And then it goes on to say, so He made man in the image of God. (Genesis 1:28) But He's saying, "*Let us make man in our image... (and in) our likeness.*" Have you ever read that?

People will say, well, God's obviously talking to the angels. Really? Find me one passage where it says man is created in the image of angels. Because what God said is, "*Let us make man in our image.*" Okay? God did not make man in the image of angels, He made man in the image of God.

And then it goes on from there where you hear these plural references. In fact, Elohim, which is translated, God, in the Old Testament, is plural. It's plural. It's very interesting in the Old Testament. These ideas are, you can see the seeds of these things, which then bloom, if you will, in the New Testament, and the teaching of the New Testament Scripture.

I don't know if you've ever, let me show you an image. This is very interesting. I don't know if you've ever seen this before. This is probably one of the best images for the Trinity because I don't know how well you can see it, but in the center you have God and each of those spikes out from God say **is**.



And so you've got God is Father, God is Son, God is Spirit or Holy Spirit. But then in the circle around, it says, **is not**. In other words, you follow that from Father is not Spirit, Spirit is not Son, and Son is not Father. What we mean by that is, even though they are One. They are distinguishable in the sense of study.

We study and we understand, God has revealed Himself in the Persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Three Persons, one God.

You say, well, pastor Paul, that's ridiculous. I agree. You're not going to get any argument from me. It sounds... Here's another question. What man would come up with this? What man would come up with an explanation for God that you can't explain? With an idea for God that is beyond human comprehension? I mean, people would laugh you, I mean, it's just, it's a ridiculous idea.

God has revealed Himself in the Scripture. All right, I hope you're writing down questions that you might have. I'm trying to leave some time for Q&A at the end.

Here comes our third statement.

I believe in the full deity and full humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; in his virgin birth and sinless life; in His complete and finished work on the cross and His bodily resurrection from the dead.

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Wow. Lots of things going on here, let me enumerate them here for you. First of all, we're saying in this essentially that,

1. Jesus was fully God and fully man
2. Jesus was born of a virgin
3. The cross lacks nothing in terms of providing us with salvation
4. Jesus was raised bodily from the dead.

Jesus was fully God and fully man. Jesus was born of a virgin. The cross lacks nothing in terms of providing us with salvation. And Jesus was raised bodily from the dead.

Have you ever thought about the importance of these individual statements at all? It's interesting, when you're talking about Jesus, about His nature, His work, and so forth. We talk about these things, we'll make reference to them from time to time, but often we don't think about the gravity and the importance of these particular things.

What about some passages to help us understand this first idea that, Jesus is fully God and fully man. Well actually, they're plentiful. You can find lots of passages. People will refuse to believe it, but they are plentiful. In fact, 700 years before Christ was born, listen to what Isaiah said. He said,

**Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)**

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, (which literally means the Father of Everlasting, or the Father of Eternity, or if you will, the Creator of Eternity, and) Prince of Peace.*

Now, this is a wonderful prophecy, again, written down 700 years before the birth of Christ. But what does it say about Jesus? It first of all says, to us a child is born. What does that tell you? That speaks of His humanity, right? He's a child who had to be born. Every human being had to be born, but it doesn't just stop there.

It would stop there for you and I, for unto us, a child is born. Your parents might've said, but when God goes on and speaks of His Son, He goes on and say *"to us a son is given."* Now, that's interesting and notice, He's going to be called, *"Mighty God."* *"...a son is given;..."*

Listen, what God is telling you and I through the prophet Isaiah is that He is going to be fully man, because He's going to be born but He's also going to be God, because God is the One giving Him. He is the Son of God. Listen, it is impossible for Jesus to be the Son of God and not be equal to God. The concept or the idea of sonship guarantees equality. Okay. If Jesus is the Son of God, then He is equal to God. The Jews understood that.

We Christians have stumbled over it because groups like the Jehovah's witnesses and others have muddied the water, but you can find passages in the Gospels where the Jews got really irate with Jesus. And even asked Him at one point, He says, why are you starting to stone Me? Is it because of the miracles I've done? Do you know what they said? They said, we're not stoning you for any of those things. We're stoning you because you are claiming, a mere man, are claiming to be the Son of God, thus making yourself equal to God. That's what the Jews said. They got it. I don't know why we struggle with it. If He's God's Son, He's equal to God, okay?

If you've got in Isaiah a Son being given, it is very appropriate that one of the things He would be referred to as is Mighty God, okay? And again, that's what Isaiah tells you. And then you've got Luke who records the angel speaking to Mary, saying to her,

**Luke 1:35 (ESV)**

*And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God."*



*And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.*

We've established already, if Jesus is the Son of God, He's equal to God. But notice, He's going to be born of Mary which tells you, He's also human. So Jesus is, at once, human and God.

Pastor Paul, explain how that can be. Pfft, you kidding me? You think I got that kind of understanding? None of us do. Listen, that's why we call it, the miracle of the incarnation, it truly is. It's the miracle. How can God become a man, retain His full Godhood, and be fully also man? I don't have a clue. All I know is that God's Word says it. Alright? And there are so many more passages that cover the deity of Christ and speak also about His humanity.

By the way, can I just encourage you in something? If you've been struggling lately with the deity of Jesus Christ, maybe some Jdubs (Jehovah Witnesses) have come to your door or some, you picked up some literature or something like that, and you've just been challenged with the deity of Christ. Come talk to me. I will give you a truckload of evidence from the Bible that just absolutely proves beautifully and perfectly, that Jesus is God in human flesh. It is, frankly, a very easy doctrine, but I understand how those teachings can get under your skin. Or when those people come and talk to you, over a period of time it wears you down and you begin to question.

And I remember a number of years ago, I had a gal in our church who called me up and just said, okay, I've been kind of trying to minister to some of these JWs who've been coming to my door, and frankly, it has shaken me a little bit about the deity of Christ, so talk to me. And you know what? I was like, I am so glad you called because I understand what that's like, to have people get into your head. And let's go back to the Word, and let's look at the Word, and let's see what it says.

Alright, the next thing we're going to deal with is the virgin birth. Have you thought about that lately? Is it important? What's so important about Jesus was born of a virgin? I mean, okay, right? Just that He was born, isn't that the important thing? I mean, God can do anything. Why do we care? Why do we say in our statement of faith, and why would you even need to defend the idea that Jesus was born of a virgin? Why is it even important?

Well, it's important because of some other things that are given to us in the Word of God related to the seed of man and how man begets sinful man. The

Bible makes that, Paul talks about that in Romans. I won't take time to quote some of those passages, but Paul talks about how through one man all sinned and every... Man begets sin and the seed of man joining with the woman creates sinful human beings.

The fact of the matter is, the virgin birth circumvented the transmission of the sinful nature that I powerfully passed on to my four children and that you've passed on to your kids too, if you've had them. That was circumvented in the person of Jesus, because Mary was a vessel, but the seat of man did not enter into the equation of the incarnation.

Remember the Holy Spirit, or excuse me, the angel said to Mary, the Holy Spirit will overshadow you. Beautiful language to describe the process of conception whereby Mary becomes this beautiful, holy vessel of the Lord. But man is not involved in the process of impregnating this woman. That's why God chose a virgin so that we would know and understand that the stain of sinful human flesh was not contained in the Person of Jesus.

So why is that important? It's important because Since Jesus doesn't carry the stain of sinful man, He qualifies to be our substitution on the cross. We can have someone stand up for us, literally die for us on our behalf, because He had no sin for which He had to die Himself. Therefore, He could be the stand in for you and I. But this is shown us through the virgin birth. That's why that is important. It is an integral part of our understanding of why Jesus is the spotless Lamb of God, right?

Thirdly, we say in this statement the cross is sufficient as a means of securing our salvation. We'll call this, The Sufficiency of the Cross. And what it basically means is that when we believe that what Jesus did on the cross was enough. Let me show you a passage from Romans. Chapter 1. Paul writes,

**Romans 1:16 (ESV)**

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, (the good news, why?) for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (or to the Gentile)*

What is Paul saying here? He says, I'm not ashamed of the Gospel. I'm not ashamed of what Jesus did on the cross. You see, and in this particular passage, Gospel and cross are synonymous because Paul is talking, and has talked in

other places in the New Testament, how the cross is a stumbling block to many people. It's foolishness to many people. And there are some, who refused to be connected to the cross because of what it reflects onto their lives.

Paul says, I'm not ashamed of it. I don't have any shame at all about what Jesus did on the cross, which is the essence of the good news. I'm not ashamed. Why? It's the power of salvation. Notice Paul doesn't say it is a power of salvation. It is the power of salvation. It is the way we are saved, all right? And that's what we're saying when we talk about the cross. Let me show you what Paul said in to the Galatians. He wrote,

**Galatians 6:14 (ESV)**

*But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

*But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

What is Paul saying here? The cross is it and may I never boast in anything else because the cross is it. It is the means by which we are saved. It is the way. When you and I speak of what Jesus did on the cross and we talk about it, we need to talk about it in a way that conveys the idea that I'm not trusting in anything other than the cross. People, you understand, don't you? Even in the Christian church, things have just seeped in over the years. It's the cross plus. And there have been a lot of pluses...

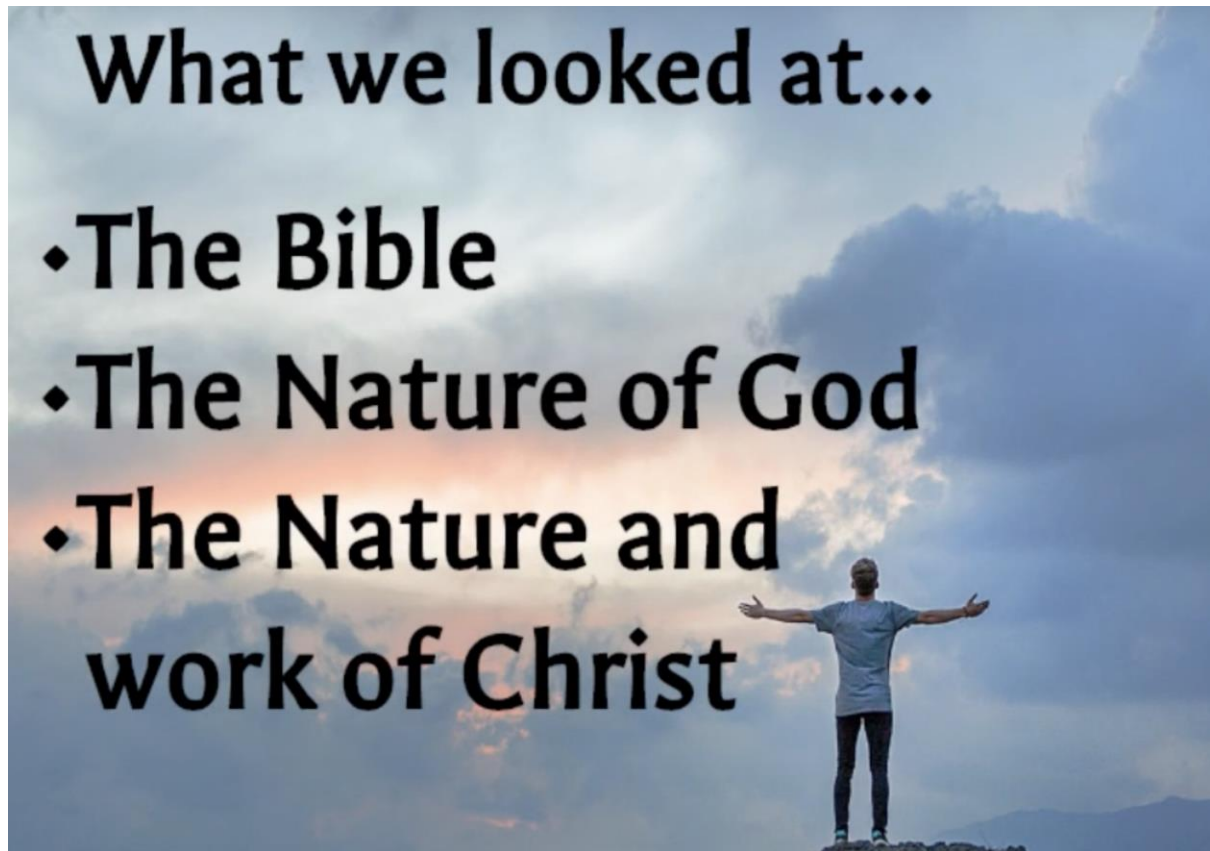
That's what was going on in the church in Galatia or the churches in Galatia. That was a region. They were beginning to embrace other things related to Jewish legalism, Sabbath keeping, circumcision, food laws.

And Paul had some very strong things to say to the believers in the region of Galatia. One of the things he said to them was, listen, if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, I tell you, Christ will be of no value to you, whatever. In other words, you want to ruin the cross.

Listen, the cross is powerful. It is powerful unto salvation. You want to minimize it. You want to ruin it. You want to weaken it, add something to it.

We believe in the sufficiency of the cross. We believe the cross is enough. And specifically what I mean by that is what Jesus did on the cross was enough to pay for our salvation. He paid it. You don't pay it. He paid it. Right? I mean, that's something we need to convey very clearly as a truth statement.

Let's take a look here in review of what we've looked at here tonight.



We've looked at the Bible. We've talked about the inspiration of the Bible. We've talked about the authority, the infallibility of the Bible.

We've talked about the nature of God. We've dealt with His triune nature, that He is one God. Made up of three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Co-equal, uncreated, and One.

And we have talked about the nature and the work of Christ's nature meaning that He is fully God and fully man. And the work of Christ meaning His death on the cross and the sufficiency of that death for our salvation.

Very important truth statements that we've made here tonight. Very important reminders for you and I. These are the pillars, guys. These are the, this is the bedrock, the foundation of what we believe.