3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL
10 – Tuesday – December 1, 2026

Biblical Authority

THE BIBLE IS (1) **the product of prophetic, inspired revelation from God**. It (2) **answers life's big questions** and is (3) **God's unique means of revealing Himself to the human race**.

THROUGH SCRIPTURE, (4) **we learn the meaning of human existence**, (5) **the character and will of God**, and (6) **God's purpose for our lives**.

(7) **The Bible is the gold standard of truth**, (8) **the authority by which we must make life choices**. (9) It is **the foundation of the Christian's worldview** and (10) **the basis of all revealed truth**. It is (11) **the Christian's rule of faith and practice**.

We can either **accept or reject God's Word**, and **we need not go to the extreme of burning our Bibles**, as King Jehoiakim did *(see Jer. 36:22-27)* in rejecting it.

Ignoring it, even **while professing to believe in it**, can **be just as problematic**.

When we discover and accept God's Word, we can, like King Josiah, **be transformed and lead others to God** *(see 2 Kings 22:10-13)*.

Today **people often approach Scripture by looking for its faults or ridiculing it**. Some **see the Bible as out of step with contemporary mores** (it usually is, and ought to be, too). Many **deride it because it contradicts "scientific" or cultural trends**.

1. The Bible is authoritative because God is its ultimate Author

Although human beings wrote the Scriptures, the message originated with God. The Bible is not merely humanity's thoughts about God; it is God communicating His truth to humanity.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."
—2 Timothy 3:16, NKJV

The expression "inspiration of God" literally means "God-breathed." Therefore, when Scripture speaks faithfully, God speaks authoritatively.

Key thought: The Bible does not possess authority because humans voted to give it authority. It possesses authority because it came from the highest Authority—God Himself.

2. The Bible is authoritative because the Holy Spirit guided its writers

The biblical writers did not simply record their private opinions or imaginations. The Holy Spirit directed them as they communicated God's message through their individual personalities, vocabularies, experiences, and writing styles.

"For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."—2 Peter 1:21, NKJV

David similarly testified: **"The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue."—2 Samuel 23:2, NKJV**

Key thought: The writers were human, but the Source of their message was divine. God used human instruments without surrendering divine authority.

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3. The Bible is authoritative because Jesus accepted Scripture as the Word of God

Jesus repeatedly quoted Scripture as the final answer to temptation, theological controversy, and moral confusion. During His temptation, He answered Satan three times with the words, **"It is written" (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).**

Jesus declared:

"The Scripture cannot be broken."—John 10:35, NKJV

He also prayed:

"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."—John 17:17, NKJV

After His resurrection, Jesus used the Scriptures to explain His identity and mission:

"And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." —Luke 24:27, NKJV

Key thought: We cannot consistently accept Jesus as Lord while rejecting the Scriptures that Jesus accepted as authoritative.

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4. The Bible is authoritative because it is true, trustworthy, and unchanging

Human opinions change. Cultures change. Philosophies rise and fall. But God's Word remains dependable because God's character does not change.

“The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.”—Psalm 119:160, NKJV

“Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.”—Psalm 119:89, NKJV

Jesus said:

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.”
—Matthew 24:35, NKJV

Key thought: The Bible does not adjust its truth to accommodate every generation. It calls every generation to adjust its life to the truth.

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5. The Bible is authoritative because fulfilled prophecy reveals divine knowledge

God repeatedly declared future events before they occurred. Fulfilled prophecy demonstrates that Scripture sees beyond the limitations of human knowledge.

“Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning.”
—Isaiah 46:9–10, NKJV

Jesus gave prophecy to strengthen the faith of His disciples:

“And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.”
—John 14:29, NKJV

Examples include the rise and fall of world empires in Daniel 2 and 7, the prophecy concerning Cyrus in Isaiah 44:28–45:1, and the prophecies concerning Christ’s birth, ministry, death, and resurrection.

Key thought: The Bible does not merely record history after it happens; it reveals that history remains under God’s sovereign control.

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6. The Bible is authoritative because it possesses power to transform lives

The Bible does more than provide information—it brings conviction, exposes sin, creates faith, produces spiritual rebirth, and transforms character.

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.”
—Hebrews 4:12, NKJV

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
—Romans 10:17, NKJV

“Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.”
—1 Peter 1:23, NKJV

God promises that His Word will accomplish its divine purpose:

“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void.”
—Isaiah 55:11, NKJV

Key thought: Other books may inform the mind, but the Bible has the God-given power to convict the conscience, convert the heart, and redirect the life.

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7. The Bible is authoritative because it is the final standard for doctrine, conduct, and judgment

The Bible determines what Christians should believe, how they should live, and how every teaching should be tested. Human traditions, personal experiences, religious leaders, and cultural opinions must all be examined by Scripture.

“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”
—Isaiah 8:20, NKJV

The Bereans were commended because they tested even Paul’s preaching by Scripture:

“They received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”
—Acts 17:11, NKJV

Jesus also said:

“The word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”
—John 12:48, NKJV

Key thought: We do not stand in judgment over the Bible; ultimately, the Bible stands in judgment over us.

Statements from Modern Christian Writers

J. I. Packer wrote:

"The proper ground for believing a thing is that God says it in His written Word."

Packer's point is that the believer's ultimate foundation is not popular opinion, personal preference, or human philosophy, but what God has revealed in Scripture. J. I. Packer on Biblical Authority

John Stott explained that Scripture is God's written Word because God caused it to be recorded for later generations. He connected biblical authority directly with inspiration: the words themselves are "God-breathed." John Stott, *The Authority and Power of the Bible*

C. S. Lewis stated:

"What we are committed to believing is whatever can be proved from Scripture."

Lewis recognized Holy Scripture as the supreme standard for Christian faith and practice. C. S. Lewis on Holy Scripture

Summary

The Bible is a book of authority because:

1. **God is its ultimate Author.**
2. **The Holy Spirit guided its writers.**
3. **Jesus affirmed its authority.**
4. **Its truth is trustworthy and unchanging.**
5. **Fulfilled prophecy reveals divine foreknowledge.**
6. **Its message transforms human lives.**
7. **It is the final standard for faith, conduct, and judgment.**

Closing thought: The Bible does not ask permission to be authoritative. It speaks with authority because behind its human writers stands the living God. We do not make the Bible the Word of God by believing it; we believe it because it is the Word of God.