

What the Bible Is NOT

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MAIN VERSES

[Exodus 4:9](#) • [Exodus 17:14](#) • [Exodus 24:4](#) • [Exodus 32](#) • [Ezekiel 4:9](#) • [Jeremiah 36](#) • [Isaiah 5:7](#) • [2 Timothy 3:16](#) • [Matthew 26:26](#) • [Exodus 12](#) • [Genesis 1](#) • [John 1](#) • [Revelation 4](#)

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family. So welcome home.

Super excited about the message today. Very, very clickbait-ish title. I know. Got you here. It worked. That's good.

Recommended Resources on Bible History

First thing we're going to start off doing today—because I don't want to stop and read—I just want to let you know, guys, I read a lot of books and a lot of different resources. And in doing so, I kind of feel like I can vet them. And if you have ever wondered, or if you would like to pursue after this message a little bit of history on how the Bible came to be, the history of the actual Bible, not the theology within the Bible, but the actual book that we have in our lives that we hold so close and dearly to our faith today, if you would like some resources on how to explore that beautiful and complex and seemingly messy history, but perfect history, here are some great resources.

The first one I recommend to everybody is from a scholar named John Barton, and he has a book—it's like 120 pages. It's a summary of a much bigger book in the list, How the Bible Came to Be. You can knock it out in a day. It will give you a rough run-through of just the complex and beautiful history of the book that you hold in your lap or on your phone. Another fantastic, pretty easy to read, geeky book is How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stewart. Fantastic read. Same topic. History of the Bible, same author, Dr. John Barton. This one is 604 pages. Ask me how I know. It is much more dense than the first one. All

the same, you can nerd out on it quite a bit. There's also a lecture available online by Professor Tim Mackey called The History of the Bible. It's two, two and a half hours long. Yeah, it's a fantastic overview. And also the Pentateuch is narrative by John Selhammer, which is more of next week's message and the beauty of what's actually in the Bible and so on and so forth.

Starting a New Series on the Torah

We are starting a new series on the Torah here at Founded in Truth. And the Torah is the beautiful, rich beginning of the unified story of the Bible. And as I was putting it together, I realized that there's a lot in there that... well, it may be a good idea for us to revisit some of the basics of the Bible, right? Before we jump into such a thick section of the Scriptures itself. And not necessarily just the theology of the Bible, but it might be a good idea for us to visit the basics of what the Bible is and what the Bible says about itself and the history of the Bible. We can kind of discern what the Bible is and, of course, what the Bible is not.

And today, I want to walk around the neighborhood of the complexity of the Bible a little bit and its history. And I specifically want to highlight the damage that can occur when we make it into something that it is not.

How Different People View the Bible

It's amazing the contrast in how believers from all over the world view the Bible based on how and when they were introduced to it. You ever notice that?

If you were raised in the faith, right, you were taught that the Bible is what it is, and you're not surprised when you open it up. You're not surprised when you turn the page and there's a talking donkey, right? From a kid we've been reading this. And it's not a big deal for you to read these things that for other people may just be a little foreign and hard to grasp.

If you came to be a believer later in life, it may have not been as easy to digest these new writings, these ancient writings that you're thumbing through. The Holy Spirit has stirred something in you to the point of humbly coming before God today. Putting away your old self, falling on your knees and pledging your allegiance to a king whose kingdom is eternal. And then you begin to open up this word, this word that this king talks about.

And sometimes it seems like a little bit of a foreign thing. I mean, you get to page three. Oh, look, there's a talking snake and there's an angel doing Cirque du Soleil stunts with a flaming sword. Like, what do you do with that?

And I bring this up because everybody may have a different experience on how they were introduced to the Bible. And I guess I just want to say that I think that's a beautiful thing about how God draws us from all different directions into his word.

The Problem with a Simplistic View

So typically when we see the Bible, and this has been my experience, we are raised, not necessarily by our parents, but by our communities, maybe our churches that we've attended, to view the Bible as the authoritative word of God. And rightly so, because it is, of course.

But when the Bible is vaguely labeled from God and holy without any explanation, it tends to create a very narrow view of what the Bible is. You guys know what I'm talking about? Maybe? Not really?

When we're told that the Bible is the authoritative word of God and it came down from heaven, which it didn't in a very literal sense, it did not, with no explanation and no concept of how the complex of the history of the Bible contributed to the scriptures that you have today, we don't really know how to read the Bible and we don't know how to handle it and we don't know what its purpose is because we don't know what its history is. As if it just floated out of heaven. And it didn't.

And we won't be going into too many details of the amazing history of the Bible and how God used humanity to bring about the trueness of His Word today, but it's not something to hide from. It's not something to hide from.

And the issue is when we view the Bible in this manner, that it fell from the clouds, it tends to make it a very foreign thing to us. If I can be honest, it's completely unrelatable. I mean, this thing came from heaven. How is it relevant to me as a human on earth?

The Bible's Depth Deserves Our Curiosity

Dr. John Barton says it best. He says that when we view the Bible as simple and unchanging in its full existence, not acknowledging the journey that it has taken to come to us, and vaguely labeling it holy without any venturing of an explanation of what that actually means, it does have its benefits to a believer. It gives us a sense of security in us holding it as an authoritative product from God, rightly so. It's simple. It's easy. We don't have to worry about complex history or where it came from or who wrote it. We can just simply place it on our laps and this is all I need to know.

Anyone ever had that mentality before? Just a few. It's comforting and it's easy not to have to think about that. It is. But he continues, but such a mindset also tends to make the Bible into a two-dimensional book that lacks depth and variety that even mere ordinary secular books carry.

Why is it that we as Christians don't want to know more about these collections of books that we call the Bible?

He concludes, "...paradoxically, the very holiness and authority of the Bible can have the effect of suppressing in our minds many of the questions that we ask about ordinary books, with the result that we find it less interesting than many of the books of far less religious prestige."

Now, I can already feel the heretic meter going up, so I'm hoping that I can clarify what I mean and make this relatable.

Our Curiosity About Books

Has anyone ever read Lord of the Rings? No. Two people that I know. Who has read The Hobbit and or Lord of the Rings? Thank you for participating in the question. You've seen it. Okay. You've seen the movie. You can quote the movie. I can't wait for second breakfast, right? Here we go. Noneshell. Yeah, everybody knows it, right? It's great. You're fans. You're interested in the story.

Did anyone geek out and go out and buy the Elvin Dictionary to look up the words and all that? Okay. You're interested in the story. How about those other books that are popular in pop culture?

I know, what was it, a couple of years ago, Hunger Games was the big one that was really, really popular, right? A couple of folks. Yeah. What was it? It was like you do this or something. What's the little? Oh, that's right. Yeah. Fans. I see you. You guys are going to prove this point fantastically. Thank you.

I know Hunger Games was a big rave in the Carolinas because District 12 is like an hour up the road. You can go visit it. It's pretty cool. I don't know what other popular books are around. I think when I was a kid, that's when Harry Potter came out, and that was the big rave in pop culture and whatnot. Divergent Series, I think, was that a recent one? I missed the movies. About the same time as the Hunger Games? Movies and such.

When we read these books, we dive into them and we ask questions and we want them to take us on the journey that they are designed to take us on. Why is it that we don't look at the Bible with as much excitement, curiosity, or interest?

J.R.R. Tolkien, I feel, would be ashamed that someone would be more interested in his, and more fascinated in chasing his stories of elves and humans than the actual Bible that he's writing to get us interested in reading.

C.S. Lewis wrote about this magic lion that represents Jesus, so we would be interested in the actual story, and be fascinated, and intrigued, and curious, and want to pursue, and be consumed by the actual story of Jesus. Far too often we're too scared to ask the questions we are allowed to ask about the Bible and the story within it. The Bible becomes minimized, and although famous, it's boring. How many of us know about Shakespeare? We learned about Shakespeare. Everyone knows about some Shakespeare, right? How many of you know about Romeo and Juliet? How many of you have read, not watched a movie, not played, how many of you have read the story of Romeo and Juliet? More than Lord of what? Whatever. I don't believe you. Whatever. I've never read it. And to be perfectly honest, if I had read it, I don't think I'd read it again. Right?

Now, many of us have likely seen the movies. I still stand that Leonardo DiCaprio was the best Romeo. That's just me. Shakespeare reached the summit in English literature, and as a result of its peak achievement in status, the actual enjoyment of the work is often ignored. Everybody knows about Shakespeare, but no one really cares to spend their weekend reading Shakespeare. Am I right? Everyone knows about it, but no one really cares.

The Famous But Boring Bible

And it may be a bad analogy, but everybody knows about the Bible. It's the word of God. It has the pinnacle of status. It is the number one best-selling book that's given away in the world. Number one book in the world. And we would rather sit and read about some chick who has to decide whether to date a vampire or a werewolf over the weekend. It's true. It's true. It's true. Do you see the problem? Why? Why? And the thing is, the problem isn't necessarily you or me. The problem is the mentality that we and many other Christians have fallen into, a mentality that's actually been promoted in Christianity. We've been pushed with these lenses that the Bible is meant to be something that it's not necessarily meant to be. Mainly, something that floated down from heaven and is untouchable by true human understanding. Or heaven forbid we make the Bible into something other than the testimony of God's redemptive salvation and covenantal pursuit towards humanity. No, we would much rather argue about the Bible than actually be consumed by the Bible.

We'd like to turn the Bible into a scientific textbook than actually be consumed by the story and the message of the Bible. Sure, we can find science in the Bible. It's in there, but it was not written by the biblical authors to be held in scientific debates in 2019. Moses did not envision that happening when he was writing. What did he envision? What was the intention of the biblical authors when they wrote the Bible?

Asking the Author's Intention

So here's the first rule of reading the Bible. And write this down. Walk away with this today. Please walk away with this today and nothing else. If you don't, just this is it. What, when you go and read the Bible, I want you to ask, what is the intention of the author writing to me? That's it. What is the intention of the author? And that will hopefully save you. When the author wrote [Genesis 1](#) in a very poetic manner, what was his intention for you to see and take away? A lot of it's obvious. When the author of Jonah wrote, what was the intention for you to walk away with? Judges. What was the intention when you read Judges and you're at the end of Judges and you're like, why is this in the Bible? Right? This is the book of the Bible that makes it not family friendly. This is not cool. What did they want me to take away from this?

Starting from this point of view helps keep the Bible in its proper context because J.R.R. Tolkien's intention was not that you would walk away thinking that incantations and magic were real and edifying to the believer. And if we read Lord of the Rings like we read the Bible, we could totally make a stance for that. Yeah, magic's obviously kosher and we just need to... J.R.R. Tolkien was trying to teach me magic so I can ward off and create an unstoppable gate that no one can pass. No, that wasn't the intention of the author.

And sometimes my Baptist background in me begins to bubble up and it says, but God wrote it, Matthew. It's a very bold statement. I do believe that God's spirit authored, helped author the Bible. But technically, God did not write the Bible. That's not a true statement. God inspired men to write the Bible. That's a fact and that's what the Bible actually says about itself. Is that uncomfortable to admit? That God would actually use his created beings to deliver a message to creation? Is it uncomfortable to think that he would actually create image bearers that he would work through to show his love and justice and reign throughout creation? Because that's what [Genesis 1](#) says our purpose is. Is it so far-fetched to think that God would commission men, possibly women, to write his word? Is it so far-fetched to think that the Bible is a mixture between the divine and humanity where God meets us, where the two, heaven and earth, collide, and it is a product of that?

God's Fingerprints in Scripture

The Bible is a unified story of God's pursuit towards humanity and what it means to be transformed into an image-bearer of God's love and justice through Jesus. It's a book that testifies of the reality of how heaven is manifest on earth, and it all revolves around the single person of Yeshua, and it was written by people commissioned by God. And what's interesting, after we get past that initial statement, is you can see the fingerprints of people just like me, just like you, that God used all over the Bible. And it's exciting because when I see someone else's human fingerprints on the Bible that God commissioned, it makes me think, wow, maybe God can use me to do something great in his kingdom.

Not only that, it makes the Bible more relatable now because the person that was writing this lived a similar life to me. He had stresses. He had probably a wife and kids, and he woke up angry some days, and yet he's obeying God and writing the Word of God. Sometimes we almost want the Bible to be something different, or we want to take something in the Bible and make that the sole pursuit of the entire Bible, and we like to view the Bible sometimes as a story. Not necessarily that we're to meditate on daily and to gain divine wisdom for how to live out God's righteousness in this world. Sometimes we just like to make the Bible into a divine checklist—a checklist that if you check off enough boxes, you'll go to heaven? None of us have ever done that to the Bible, have we? Never. That detracts from the very essence of everything the Bible is and its intention. And in doing so, we end up minimizing the power of the gospel message found in its very pages.

The Ezekiel Bread Example

So, example time. Now that that's over, everybody knows what this beautiful loaf of bread is, right? This is whose bread? Ezekiel's bread. Who loves to eat some of this low glycemic wonder bread right here?

So, the bread actually says, it's beautiful, the miracle of the sprouts, food for life to live grain different. So, in it, where is it? Where is it? It's in here somewhere. Hold on. Here we go. Yeah. This truly is the staff of life. And they have a Bible verse. [Ezekiel 4](#) and 9 on the front. Look, it's kosher.

So they have a Bible verse in the front to let you know that they got the recipe from the Bible. Right now. This is my story. My story is walking through Harris Teeter one day and I find there's bread sitting in the freezer section. Matt, why would there be bread sitting in the freezer section? That's a great question. Who likes frozen bread? Apparently Ezekiel. So I see Ezekiel's

bread in the frozen section and I'm like, look, it's from the Bible. And so I think to myself, well, the Bible came down from heaven and it's holy and now I can take some bread that's made from the Bible and I can eat it and that will make me a little bit more holy and righteous because I'll be more biblical. I'm not saying this is you. I'm saying this is my story. This makes me feel holier because it's from the Bible. Everybody jive with me? Are we tracking? Okay, great. Fantastic.

So [Ezekiel 4](#) and 9. Let's go ahead and check this out. Here we go. Here's the bread. Verse 11 of [Ezekiel 4](#). So God is giving Ezekiel this recipe, this divine recipe for bread. Right? That's how we got this recipe for bread. And it is, I think, generally healthy for you. It's low glycemic. But what happens is when we continue reading the verse, in verse 12, eat it as you would any loaf of bread. Now bake it in the sight of the people using human excrement for fuel, the Lord said. In this way the people of Israel will eat defiled food among the nations where I will drive them. They have the verse right here and make bread of it. Dot, dot, dot. So they cut it off.

See, many of us have viewed Ezekiel bread in the store and bought it because maybe we're trying to lose some weight or do low blood sugar. Maybe it's because we thought, well, it comes from the Bible, therefore, it would make me holier. This is a characteristic of minimizing the Bible to a simple checklist and manipulating how you view the Bible as something that it's not. We miss the complete context of the verse. And by doing so, we haven't just embarrassed ourselves, you see. God's telling Ezekiel to send judgment to the people of Jerusalem. And he says, listen, Ezekiel, I want you to make this bread awesome.

The Danger of Taking Scripture Out of Context

And I want you to cook it with a human turd. That's what he says. That is what the Bible says. And then I want you to eat it before the people of Jerusalem to symbolize the climax of my wrath that's going to be poured out on them. Yeah. This is like the biblical Minnie's pie. Ezekiel's bread isn't giving you that sense of holiness any longer, is it? We're going to throw that out when we get home.

So the story goes, Ezekiel objects. God, I don't want to eat bread that's cooked with human excrement. Can you please? That's just not totes kosher. Can I please not do this? Good for you, Ezekiel, for standing up for yourself. So God graciously allows him to use a cow patty instead. This is how the story develops. All the same, this demonstrates something. That is pretty funny. But it can also be so damaging to a Christian believer in their faith. Making and viewing and using the Bible incorrectly means that it simply is not right.

Imagine if you viewed the entire Bible and chose to implement the entire Bible in your life, in your daily life, like with [Ezekiel 4](#) and 9. Glancing at a verse, taking it completely out of its historical and cultural context, the background, the scope of the entire story. Removing something from what is surrounding it. How damaging could that be?

Maybe you already know. How many of you have ever seen someone abuse the Bible intentionally or ignorantly? And they'll take a verse here and a verse there, throw it at people, or manipulate the verse to... yeah. Don't have time to go on some examples, but most of you know what I'm talking about. The Bible can be turned into a very deadly weapon that it was never meant to be and used in a type of warfare that distorts its very message.

The Bible is an amazing thing. If we dare to look at what it really is and what it really says and how it really came to be and how we're actually supposed to read it. So for me, seeing how the Bible came to be and exploring its history, it makes me appreciate my God that much more. It makes him that much more robust.

The Bible as Human and Divine

The Bible was written by people. The Bible says this. Spoiler alert. It was written by people that God commissioned to write his word. Very real people, just like you and me, struggling in life, and writing down both their direct and indirect experiences with our God. There's no cover-up here. There's no scandal. There's no conspiracy about this. You can go to school. You can get a PhD in textual criticism. You can get a PhD in studying how the Bible came to be. It's not a conspiracy.

And when we choose to acknowledge the Bible, it begins to become even more relevant in our daily life. You begin to see things that connect with you. The Bible has both a human and a divine side because, well, that's just how God works.

I have a great quote I took from Dr. Mackey—it's fantastic. Just soak it in. The Bible is a thoroughly human book that speaks God's word to his people.

Now, some of you are offended by this quote, and some of you, if you're like me, say you kind of want to go home and read the Bible now. Let's jump into some of the things that the Bible tells us about itself. Can we do that? Can we read what the Bible says? Can we read about how the Bible talks about how it was written?

You want to look in the Bible to see where it talks about how it was made? Fantastic. I'm so glad.

What the Bible Says About Itself

Do you guys know where the first incident in the Bible where God told someone to write something down, record it, is? Many of you would say Genesis, because of course Genesis was the first book that was written in the Bible. Exodus chapter 17, starting in verse 12. This is the first time that we actually see a clear instance of God telling someone to write something down that actually became part of the Bible. And it's Moses.

And this is right after the Passover incident, just a few chapters later, and Israel is out in the wilderness, and they're prone to attack by these little desert terrorists known as Amalek—the little thugs in the desert. And so Amalek comes to war against Israel. And you know the story. God's like, "Raise your arms up, Moses." So as long as Moses has his arms raised, Israel will overcome Amalek. But how long can you do that?

And so his arms begin to kind of float down. So Amalek prevails. And so here's where we start off in verse 12. But Moses' hands grew weary during the battle, so they took a stone and put it under him so he could sit down. While Aaron and Hur held up his hands one to another...

This is the point of the story where we're like, go God, right? No one's excited. This is what I'm talking about. This is part of the story. We get excited because God just had a victory through his people. He helped them go to victory. So everybody say, yay! Okay, good.

Then the Lord said to Moses, Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek unto the heavens.

The very first time that God tells someone to write something that's recorded in the Bible. I love that. There was no possession that took place with Moses. His eyes did not roll back into the back of his head. His arm did not just start scratching on paper. Moses, write everything that you saw. Write what took place today down. Yes, sir. He wrote it down, and here we have it. This is the inspired word of God. Isn't that neat?

There it is. Here we have a recording of the Bible, in the Bible. And this is what takes place. Now, this takes place right after what event that happened a few chapters earlier in Egypt? The Passover. And what happened at Passover? God did what for his people? S-word, saved his people. Okay?

God's Salvation Remembered

And it's funny because God just tells Moses to write down what happened at this battle. What happened in this battle? God did what for his people? Saved his people. Fantastic. So this battle is interesting because God tells him to write it down. God never tells anyone to write down what happened in Egypt. How does he tell them to memorialize or to remember the acts of his salvation that took place in Egypt? In a meal, in an experience. I think that's kind of beautiful, and we'll talk about that a little bit later, but here we go.

Here is the evidence that the Bible was written to record stories and events that celebrate God intervening to bring salvation to his people. At least that's our conclusion of the function of the Bible in this part right here. Can we all agree on that? One of the purposes of the Bible, at least in this part, is to record the stories and events that celebrate God's intervening to bring salvation to his people.

So the word for write or wrote in Hebrew is the Hebrew word ketov. Everybody say ketov. This is one of five Hebrew words you will learn today. And [Exodus 17](#) is the very first place it appears. So I wonder where the second place this word ketov appears. I'm glad you asked. It's actually seven chapters later in Exodus chapter 24. If you're familiar with this section of scripture, you'll start to go, "Oh yeah, [Exodus 24](#)," when Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules.

And all the people answered with one voice and said, All of the words that the Lord had spoken we will do. And Moses wrote down all of the words of the Lord. There it is, ketov. He rose early in the morning, built an altar at the foot of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. He sent young men, the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half of that blood, put it in basins, and he took half of the blood and threw it on the altar.

Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. So this is the book that was written down, ketov. And they said, all that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient. And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people. I don't know if that was surprising to them or not when that happened, but my mind goes there like, oh, this is okay. And he throws the blood on the people, and he says, behold the blood of the covenant.

The Covenant at Mount Sinai

So, this is right after the section that speaks about God speaking the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. When God begins to speak and the people are frightened. But he continues speaking. He continues speaking past the Ten Words. And he actually speaks about 40

commandments up through [Exodus 23](#). And the reason why God is speaking laws to Israel at this moment in time is because right before he speaks the laws to Israel in [Exodus 19](#), he tells Israel that he saved them and that if they choose to enter into a covenant relationship with him, they will become his kingdom of priests. Everybody say kingdom of priests.

If they enter the covenant, this is what they will become, a holy nation. They will be his set-apart people. His image bearers to show forth his holiness and reign throughout the world. And there, God speaks all the terms of the covenant relationship. And then he tells Moses to write them all down.

Ketov: Salvation and Covenant

So the first two instances of ketov in the Bible are number one: the first time is to tell the story of God's salvation given to his people when God steps forward and saves his people. And two, to testify of the covenant relationship of God and the people that he brought salvation to. You following that? You checking with that? First two times. Salvation and the relationship he's pursuing through the salvation that he's always provided. This is what the Bible's about, guys, in a nutshell. This is what the story of the Bible tells us.

Now, the Bible continues to grow past this little section of Exodus, and more stories of God's salvation are written down, and more stories of God inviting and re-inviting His people back into a covenant relationship with Him continue to be written down as we progress through this unified story that we have today. But this is the foundational direction that birthed all of that, this section of Scripture right here. I love that.

The Pattern: Salvation, Covenant, and Law

The word ketov appears in a third section of scripture in [Exodus 32](#) when it speaks about God writing the Ten Commandments. And I love that. I think that's amazing because we have three instances, three different chapters where ketov is mentioned. We have number one is for salvation, which comes first. Then relationship comes second. And then the written laws in that order.

God wants you to know that he is pursuing a relationship with you that is first and foremost built on his salvation that he provides to you, and this should transform your life to one of obedience towards him. That's the foundation of why the Bible was written for you. That's the intention. No one's geeking out over that? Three katoes? Okay.

Too often we want to change that order, don't we? Too often we look at the Bible and think, hmm. We like to view the Bible as just a book that fell out of heaven, already leather-bound, in our laps, and that's simply not how it happened. It's not.

God's Divine Evolution

When I was growing up, I picture that after God made Adam, and poof, Adam's eyes opened, and he became a living being. He turned over, and there was a gift right there for him, and it was a leather-bound King James Version Bible with his name already engraved on it for him to study. That didn't happen. That did not.

The Bible was prompted by experiences that God showed forth to mankind. And he chose men and commissioned them to write these things down so that people that you can't even imagine in the future will one day read them and know about my character and know the story of what I'm trying to do for them the same that I'm trying to do for you. And it was a product of evolution—God-divine evolution—how the Bible grew.

From Story to Checklist

But we like the idea, and then we take it and make it into a bunch of rules that everyone has to follow, using a checklist to get to heaven. And that is such a deficient definition of the story that we hold so close to our faith.

There are laws in the Bible. Everybody say amen. Of course there are. There are things to be obeyed. Absolutely. Absolutely. But the moment that we make the Bible into our own personal checklist to exploit God's blessings is the moment that we bastardize the intention of the authors. That's what gets us to buy Ezekiel bread, thinking that it's going to make us holier than our neighbor, when in fact it's a symbol of God's judgment. Irony.

Learning from Job

That's what the book of Job is about. Do you guys realize that? If you can get through the long book of Job and actually maintain the storyline and the point. So Job is being tormented, essentially. Curses are coming upon him. So Job's friends go to him and they say what? Say, Job, you must have sinned. Why would they say that? Because that's what the Torah says. The Torah says that if you disobey God, you sin against God, you get curses. And if you obey God and his commandments, then you get blessings. So Job, his friends were right. Job, you must have sinned.

And I love the story. The book of Job is there to show us that if that's what we're taking away from the Torah, we are not going to get away with exploiting God's blessings in our life. It doesn't work like that. Our blessing is found in him. And obedience may be a part of that, but there's a salvational aspect and there's a relationship, a covenant relationship that we commit our loyalty to that comes first. Our blessings are found in him.

The Authority of the Bible

Soapbox. This is how the Bible here is presenting itself as an authority over God's people in Exodus. We come into a relationship with God through his salvation, and as a result, we take on and submit to the laws and commandments of that covenant relationship. And we choose to change our life and conform to his standards and...

Broken record, I know, but how does he do this? How does he relay his message? He tells certain men to write these things down. The Bible continues past this section of Exodus in this same fashion. Israel takes on the terms of the covenant. They say, all you have said, oh God, we will do. Did they stick with it? No. A couple of you were like, weren't sure where I was. Did they stick with it? No. They totally broke it. Like they messed it up completely.

God's Prophets: Human Messengers

So what does God do? He appoints and commissions men called prophets. And I want you to picture a timeline, and I want you to picture, if you can imagine, all of the Bible from this point of Israel taking on this status of accepting God's salvational actions and committing to be in a covenant relationship as a result of his salvation and committing to transform their lives according to his justice and reign and laws of his kingdom. And I want you to picture the rest of the Bible story emerging from that point. Take that in for a second. The rest of the Bible, past the story of Israel accepting the covenant terms of God's covenant, emerges from that foundation.

The prophets were sent to call Israel back to God and repent. They wouldn't have been sent to call Israel back and repent if they hadn't walked away from the covenant that they committed to. If Israel didn't need to come back to God, why would the prophets need to be sent? You tracking? Everybody good? Okay.

So you have these prophets that God raised up. Were they divine angels, these prophets? Amos? Ezekiel? Were they people? They were human beings. They were humans. And God spoke through them. Many times they would assume a first-person narrative from God or a first-

person monologue from God—'Thus saith the Lord'—and then they'd speak other times. They would just let loose and say, 'Hey, y'all need to stop and get your act together. Amos, you bunch of fat cows of Bashan, get your act together.' They were people. When we read one of the prophets let loose and give his own commentary, I feel like we can appreciate that because these are real people. These are real stories that we're invited to read and be like, 'Yeah, big cows and Bashan. That's funny.'

Jeremiah's Commission

You guys want to see something really neat? I'm about to go full geek-out mode. Prepare yourself.

So Jeremiah chapter 36. Okay? Jeremiah chapter 36. Jeremiah? Awesome, awesome book to get through.

So, Jeremiah. In Jeremiah chapter 36, and we're going to read some scriptures today. Is that okay? I don't have a choice.

Verse 1. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord. Take a scroll and write in it all of the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until today.

So we're going to stop. Just put a pin in that for a moment. Here we have God commissioning Jeremiah to write something down. What does he tell him to write down? Everything I've ever said to you since the days of Josiah. If you rewind to chapter 1, verses 1 and 2 in Jeremiah, you'll see that in the 13th year of Josiah, the word came to Jeremiah. He started. Chapter 36 is about 22 years later. I want you to put yourself in Jeremiah's position. Okay. Anyone been in a job for about 20 years, 22 years, something like that? Anyone been in a job for 15 years? Anyone been working for 15 years? Okay.

So let's say you've been in this job for 22 years and your director, your boss comes in and says, Hey, listen, I need you to write in this scroll every project that I've ever asked you to do in your career here. Did you just get a little anxious thinking about that? This is what God asked Jeremiah, essentially.

Now we know the scroll was read in a day. It was a shorter scroll, but regardless. Jeremiah, write down everything I've ever told you in the past 22 years. For what purpose? Verse 3. For what purpose? That it may be that the house of Judah will hear all the disaster that I intend to

do to them so that everyone may turn from his evil way that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin so that they will know and recognize that I am the God that brings salvation and I still want a covenant personal relationship with them.

We're going back to Exodus. Just a neat little pin there. Verse 4, Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words that the Lord had spoken to him.

So notice here, Jeremiah did not write this scroll. Who wrote the scroll? Baruch. Jeremiah dictated, and Baruch wrote it down. But if the Holy Spirit came upon Jeremiah, and he blacked out, and he wrote all the words that the Holy Spirit was forcing him to write, then why was Baruch needed?

The Scroll Gets Burned—and Rewritten

Because that's not how it happened. It's not how it happened. It doesn't mean it wasn't inspired by God, but that's not the method God used through his humans to create his word that he wanted you to hear today. Everybody good? Okay.

So Jeremiah does it. He writes all of these prophecies and visions and everything in this scroll, and then he tells Baruch to go and read it in the house of the Lord. So he does. And it's a bit of an entertaining story if you have time to read the whole of chapter 36, because Baruch reads it to his people. Then the palace hears about it—this Baruch, this guy reading this scroll from this prophet. So they call Baruch into the secretary's chamber. Imagine all the officials of the palace come and they're like, "All right, let's hear it." So they hear him read it again. And then they ponder, and they think maybe the king should hear this scroll that's been written with all of this stuff from the Lord.

Neat note here, verse 17—this is great, just to drive the point home. I think it's really cool. Like, that's just really cool. So then the officials actually tell Baruch, "All right, this is some heavy stuff, you better go hide—Jeremiah, go hide." So the king ends up—well, the letter's actually now read to the king by another secretary. And then this happens. You ready? Verse 21: "And Yehudi read it to the king and all of the officials who stood beside the king. And it was in the ninth month, and the king was sitting in the winter house." Winter is cold, so look, he has a fire. "And there was a fire burning in the fire pot before him. And Yehudi read three or four columns, and the king cut them off with a knife and threw them into the fire in the fire pot, until the entire scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the fire pot." Verse 27.

Seriously, seriously—you see it? You see it? He wrote a scroll commanded by God. It got destroyed. Then God said, write it again. So he did—added words to it. Was Jeremiah a human being? Okay, this is a point in the Bible we can relate to with this Jeremiah, okay? So your boss came in—22 years of stuff, you're going to write it down. So you wrote it down. You did it all in like an afternoon or whatever, stressed out. You go, you give it to the CEO, or the director wanted you to do that, whatever. And then he shreds it. That was a lot of work. The director comes back and says, "Yeah, just write it again, make another copy, do it again." So you do. And as you're doing it, as Jeremiah is sitting there with Baruch, he's going through this letter and he's like, "Oh wait, I remember something else the Lord said to me 15 years ago—add this in there, add this in there, add this in there." That's totally something you would do.

Two Editions, Both Inspired

There are at least two different editions of this Jeremiah scroll. Which one is the correct one? Which one is inspired by God? Both. And that's okay—that's pretty awesome. They were both inspired: Jeremiah obeyed the Lord, was commissioned to write something, and he did it, and it was inspired by the word, by the Lord. I love that. I love that it's recorded here.

Now, I do need to mention here that there is a debate over whether or not this scroll that was destroyed and rewritten and addended, if you will, is fully intact in the book of Jeremiah. Some scholars believe it's like the first 10 or 11 chapters, somewhere in there, of the book of Jeremiah that you have today. There is a lot of weight behind the idea that the first part of Jeremiah is that scroll. Did anyone just get a little excited about going back and reading the first couple chapters of Jeremiah? That's kind of cool, right? And there are some other scholars who believe the whole scroll is not fully intact in Jeremiah. Regardless, Jeremiah obeyed the word of the Lord and wrote divinely inspired words.

There was not a possession that took place here. The Holy Spirit—that did not happen. He did not black out. John did not, after having his visions in Revelation, just snap out of it and find a scroll signed by the Holy Spirit next to him. John had the visions from the Lord, he contemplated these things, and he articulated what he saw in the scroll—the book of Revelation that we have in our Bibles today. Now, why that, for me, makes the Bible more interesting is—it's likely a product of avoiding what I'd call the Shakespeare syndrome. "Oh, it's just so—I mean, if it's from heaven, then how can I ever relate to it?" I can relate to this. Wow. Is that kind of neat? This is just kind of neat.

Isaiah's Wordplay

Okay, so cool. Do you want to see something that really gets me excited? The men have probably already heard this—I talk about this all the time, it really gets me excited. Do you want to see where an author of the Bible exposes some of his poetic talent to us amidst writing a charge against Israel? Of course you do. Isaiah chapter 5—you can turn with me there. Isaiah chapter 5. If you have your phone, turn it on, you can look at it.

So Isaiah chapter 5, and we're going to go to verse 7, okay? So this is Isaiah's charge against Israel. And if you have a newer translation—anything but King James, though King James might actually do it too—you'll see stanzas formatted through the whole chapter, because Isaiah was writing in stanzas, kind of almost like poetry. It was still prose, but it was sectioned off in a very poetic manner. So Isaiah was an artiste as he charged condemnation against Israel. Again, I think that's kind of neat.

So verse 7, Isaiah chapter 5, verse 7. Everybody ready? Awesome. "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting. And he looked for justice, but behold, he saw bloodshed. For righteousness, and behold, he heard an outcry." You seem unimpressed—that's fine. So the beauty of this section, and why it sticks out in the chapter of Isaiah, is that you can tell he's being very poetic in his charges against Israel. And then he comes here and randomly decides he wants to do a wordplay in the middle of his condemnation of Israel. You ready? So we're going to read it again, we're going to do the Hebrew—hopefully you can catch it. Here we go.

"So the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting. But behold"—he looked, he looked for justice, the Hebrew word mishpat, but behold, mishpach. He looked for righteousness, tzedakah, but behold, outcry, ze'akah. Right? That's so cool. Isaiah did that, right? Almost randomly, while writing this poetically flavored condemnation of Israel, Isaiah has this idea, right? Sitting there by the candlelight, Isaiah thinks to himself, "I think—I think I can make a rhyme." Right? "I think I can make a rhyme." And he doesn't have to. Remember, he's been commissioned by God to write a letter of condemnation to Israel—hey, y'all are going to hell, repent. That's really all he had to do. But look at the chapter, look at everything he says, look at the artistry and the effort he puts into this chapter. It's so cool, and this thing is like thousands of years old, and why are we not more interested in reading this? Why do we want to read about vampires and werewolves? Why? This is so cool, and it's real, and a person just like you was called by God, and this is the result of their holy calling. It's so cool.

Isaiah Leaning Back to Admire His Work

Okay, so this geeks me out, because—have you guys ever written a really good post on social media? Maybe—and I know no one here has ever argued about anything on social media—but maybe you got in an argument, and you took your time and energy and articulated this magnificent response to this bully on this Facebook post, and you typed it out, and it was so elegant, and it was perfect, and you even ran it through Grammarly just to check that everything's good, right? And you post it, and you lean back, and it's so good that you reread it a couple times after you post it. You know what I'm talking about? If anyone's never read it—you reread it, and you're just like, "Yeah, that was good," right?

Or maybe you're an artist—maybe you drew something really, really beautiful, right? Or let's say you're a skilled artist and you do, I don't know, something really cool like calligraphy or something. Maybe you drew something that was just so great, and before you show it off to anyone, you just kind of lean back and you're like, "Man, that's a nice-looking piece of work, man. Good job. God gave me some talent. This is great." Just in awe.

I am convinced Isaiah totally did this with this verse. I am convinced, because he doesn't do it all through the chapter—it's almost like he just does it right here. Like, yeah, he's writing and he's like, "Mishpat—he went and he was looking for mishpat. Oh, but instead, tzedakah. I think—oh, that's good, that's good." Right? And if it were me, I would have called my wife in there. I would have been like, "Jenny, Jenny, come here, check this out." She would have come, and I'm like, "For tzedakah, but behold, ze'akah." And Jenny totally would have rolled her eyes and walked out the door. And I would have said something like, "This is the word of the Lord." And the catch is—it is.

The Beauty of the Rawness

It is. That's the beauty of this. That's the beauty of God choosing to commission people. To tell the world his words. It's beautiful. I know some of you guys are scared of the middle of this message. I know. This is the beauty of the rawness of what God's word is. And despite how you view this poem, it's beautiful. You may not see it the same way I did, but it's beautiful. And it deserves your attention. It deserves it.

And too many times we come before the awesome beauty of the Bible, dismissing everything that was written to enchant the way that we understand who our God is and who we are in him. And instead, we choose to fight or argue about something that has become a mere book to us. We choose to fight and argue about something that we've just turned into another book. Not a collection of divinely inspired experiences, letters, and stories that evolved through the will of

God's Spirit and the humans that were charged by that Spirit to what we should be cherishing today when we hold it.

I want you to imagine—I'll help you—imagine going to the Sistine Chapel, and I want you to imagine walking in, and you see the walls, and then you look up to see that wall, only to begin arguing and bickering about what year it was painted in or whether Michelangelo was really the only one who ever painted a brush on the finished product. Instead of standing in awe of such a magnificent beauty of what has come about, allowing yourself to be humbled at what is before you, submitting yourself to the product of this author.

And the sad thing is, we would do that if we went to see the Sistine Chapel. We'll do that for the Mona Lisa in Paris. We'll do that if we see a starry night. We won't do that for the Bible. No, we won't. Instead, we want to make it into something that fuels our own ideologies and our own pursuits and makes us feel like we are somehow righteous because it is just a divine checklist to get us into heaven, or better yet, a divine checklist to make us more righteous than everybody else in the world.

And I'm here to tell you if that's how you're treating the Bible, you're wrong. You're wrong. That is not the message or intention of the Bible and how it has evolved into what it is today.

Too many people suffered. Too many people died. Too many people spent their entire lives in monasteries, trekking and riding, blisters on their fingers to make sure that you could have some conception of the story of God's character and wisdom and how all he wants to do is show you that he loves you, he wants to save you, he wants to be in a relationship with you, and he wants to transform your life into something better that we would call a new creation.

Too many people have suffered for us to take a book of this magnitude and turn it into something that is subpar. Too many.

A Complex and Beautiful History

This book did not start as a book. It likely started with orally transmitted stories. Does that make us uncomfortable? Because no one does that nowadays. We forget that when we look at what it took to make a scroll to tell a story thousands of years ago—we're like, yeah, but you need to write it down.

Orally transmitted stories. Orally transmitted stories. Or at least some of it was orally transmitted stories. We make the assumption that Isaiah sat down one morning and wrote out all 66 chapters over a weekend. We just assume that because that's how we would write a book.

The book of Isaiah as we have it today was likely scattered throughout his entire life in the form of poems and letters and visions he contemplated and wrote down. Maybe some of it wasn't even written by him. Maybe some of it was written by his disciples of what he taught them. Shocker! Maybe all of this information was collected by someone else entirely. Maybe it was placed together in some form of what we call the book of Isaiah today, hundreds of years later.

If that is how it happened, not only is it okay—it's amazing. It's amazing. And it shouldn't scare us that the Bible has a very complex history of evolving into what we have today. Gee, that's kind of how God works. The Bible is pretty incredible. And its history is pretty incredible.

Letters that were written have been copied and distributed and recopied and sent out to faraway places. And this happened thousands and thousands and thousands of times after Yeshua. Who knows how many times it happened until the post-exilic Jews after Babylon actually compiled what we know as the Old Testament today.

Who knows? That's kind of cool. Our Bible has a history. The New Testament did not just get printed one day hot off the press. Yeshua went up to heaven and out fell the New Testament with Psalms. No, that's not what happened. That's not what happened. It took form through the followers of Yeshua carrying out the command and direction of Yeshua to tell the world the story that God started in Exodus and has dramatically reached in who Jesus is.

The four gospels that we have are thought to have started as authentic teachings of Yeshua's life in one particular church each. They organically evolved out of individual churches, each with their own copy that served as the authoritative teaching of the life and mission of Yeshua.

How the Four Gospels Came to Us

They're attributed most likely to Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John. Mark likely started in Rome—in a church in Rome. This is our copy of what Yeshua did, and we hold it authoritative.

Widely believed: Matthew shaped in Syria, Luke in modern-day Turkey—Asia Minor—and John in Ephesus. That's the consensus. We don't know for a fact.

But if all that's true, which we believe it is, I want you to imagine having our own authoritative account of Yeshua's teaching here at FIT. Just one copy. This is ours, right? We think this is the only one. Okay? This is the one that came about from a follower of Yeshua, and here we have it.

And now imagine us being completely unaware that another family fellowship way out in Oklahoma also has an individual authoritative document talking about Yeshua's life and teachings. It's kind of cool.

And now I want you to imagine another church in Canada has Luke's account and maybe a church in Mexico has John's account. We never thought about that before. We're like, no, they all four just kind of popped out of nowhere. No, this is...

Then I want you to imagine, and I really want you to try hard to imagine this, what it would be like to realize that there are more testimonies that other churches keep sacred of this Yeshua that you follow. Wow! Like you bump into your cousin from Ephesus, he's like, yeah, we have from John. What do you mean, John? What are you talking about? Yeah, I mean, we have Mark. Like, it tells us this is the account of Jesus. And he's like, no, in the beginning was the word. What are you talking about? Right?

Imagine realizing that there's another as all the communities grew bigger and overtook one another, and all of a sudden you've found four. This is such a blessing. Whoa! What God said was going to happen is happening and his gospel of truth is overtaking the world. Exactly how he's been doing it since the first pages were pinned to the Bible. That's so cool.

It isn't until 150 AD that one of the church fathers, Arrhenius, writes—he claims, around 150, so this is a long time removed. This is the first writing we have of someone actually claiming that, yeah, there's four Gospels. And he's like, yeah, of course there's four Gospels.

So by 150, we know that all four Gospels had been found and recognized and the believing community had caught them all. It's pretty cool. And he's funny because he's like, yeah, of course there were four Gospels. There can only be four Gospels. Do you want to know why? Well, because there's only four winds of earth and there's only four directions on a compass. There's only four beasts around the throne in [Revelation 4](#). So, of course there's four, silly. Thank you. You can laugh. That's funny. That's funny.

He's just like, but we know that there were four and it remained these four. It remained these four. That's kind of cool. Okay. One person thinks it's cool. I think it's cool too. It's good.

This Should Get Us Excited

This should get us excited. This should get us excited about the late and early second century Christians who were discovering each other. And what a huge discovery this was to see God still working. It should get us excited today to see that God is still working.

In the New Testament, we see Yeshua quote a lot of Scripture. He held it authoritative in the lives of those who follow God. He did. Yeshua submitted to the Scriptures. Matt, as Christians,

how do we know the Scriptures are authoritative? Because Jesus said they were, and he submitted to them. And he submitted to fulfilling them. Not a big argument.

I saw one presentation on the making of the Bible that made this fantastic point. And now we're going to enter the New Testament. We're going to conclude. At the Last Supper... The night before Yeshua is going to reveal the pinnacle of God's place of redemption and salvation through his love. He says this. He says this.

He says, Now, as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it, he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup which he had given them, saying, Drink of it, all of you, for this is the blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

The Blood of the Covenant

I tell you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in my Father's kingdom. So I kind of highlighted it. Did you catch it? Does it look familiar? The blood of the covenant? It seems Yeshua is quoting from the second time that Ketov appears in the Bible. That instance is in [Exodus 24](#). When the blood was sprinkled on the people, these words are spoken: "This is the blood of the covenant." Yeshua is saying what he's about to do is going to provide a covenant relationship with God unlike any other. And he's riffing off [Exodus 24](#)—the blood of the covenant that establishes the relationship between God and his people through his salvation work.

And look, notice here that Yeshua doesn't tell his disciples, "Go and write this down as a memorial." He doesn't say that. What does he say? No, he says memorialize this moment in a meal and an experience. Where are our minds going now? Back to where? Back to the Passover, where God revealed his ultimate salvation work. This is the king that we serve. And some of you, when we take the bread in the cup, you're almost weirded out by how excited I get when we take the bread in the cup, communion, if you will. This is why: through the bread and the cup—communion, if you will—we partake in the experience that Yeshua told us to remember. And I love that.

A Unified Story

The disciples then go out into the world. They wrote about the teachings and work of Yeshua and testified that he had been given all authority in heaven and in earth, to which we pledge our allegiance, as the Bible teaches. The Bible is primarily a human document—it is what it is, and

it's whose fingerprints are all over it—but it speaks the words of God. It is a story and a testimony of God's work of salvation and his pursuit of covenantal relationship with you. It is a testimony of what he has done, showing us his character, wisdom, and his mighty strength.

This whole time I've been speaking about the Bible and how it's an intersection between heaven and earth, between man and God. And I know that some of you have probably been thinking about a specific verse in the New Testament—[2 Timothy 3:16](#), right? Everybody knows it? Okay, we're going to read this section of Scripture because it's so awesome. But as for you, continue in what you have learned. "In the verse we all know, all Scripture is breathed out by God." That is so powerful. I love Paul's wordage there.

The Breathed Word

So the King James Version has an interesting take here. It translates this, as we know it, as "all Scripture is inspired by the Spirit of God," right? But that's not what Paul literally says in the Greek. Paul actually says "breathe out"—like as in lungs breathing. All Scripture is breathed out by God. I know that wasn't pretty, but that's what Paul says in the Greek.

And I love that because Paul here uses a metaphor, a form of literary communication, to give a bigger and more weighty thought. Because when we think—what metaphor do you see? Well, God didn't literally breathe out anything because the Bible tells us God doesn't literally have lungs. So it wasn't literal, right? But what Paul's saying—using a metaphor here—is that the very essence of God, if breath is what keeps us alive in the very life of God, the energy, the all-creative power and wonder and majesty of God comes forth through the words that are in our scriptures, through the experiences that he gave to men and charged to write them down. That's so awesome.

And what does Paul say the entire purpose of the Bible is here? Verse 15: "the sacred writings make you wise in your faith in Yeshua." The sacred writings lead you to Yeshua. The sacred writings point to Yeshua. That's their purpose. It's a very audacious statement, and it's continued throughout the New Testament. Pretty much the New Testament authors, when they were writing, they were basically like their perception of the Bible was, "Yeah, it's all about Jesus, like period. Like that's what it's all about." And they were so bold about that. And I love that because some of us even struggle with that. "Yeah, but I read all these stories and everything and like I don't see all of it." And they're like, "No, we're sold out. It's about Jesus. Like you don't understand. You don't understand. You need to read the whole story."

The Whole Story, One Purpose

And it's a unified story of us not valuing the salvational work of God and us claiming to be in relationship with him, but instead we're taking on, instead of following his wisdom and obeying him, we're disobeying him and we're taking our own ideas of what good and evil should be and we're pursuing things, ruling the world and his creation our way instead of his. And this is what manifests sin and death from being apart from him. And he's been calling us back and back and back and back and back, and we haven't been listening. And now he sent someone—Yeshua—who was the human we were always supposed to be. And now there is yet a more potent and powerful salvational work of God and a more potent and powerful blood of the covenant where we are invited to be in communion with God through this King Yeshua. So yeah, the whole Bible is about Jesus, period. It's about you and Jesus, period. That's it. The Bible is amazing.

And I have one final illustration here that I saw Professor Mackey do at the end of one of his presentations, and so I had to steal it. And I have to ask you guys: the story of the Bible is one that is complex and it's one that sometimes doesn't make sense. We have all of these stories and we have all of these letters and we have all of these poems that seemingly don't match and they don't line up sometimes. But when we take a step back—when we take a step back from all of the stories: David, Solomon—when we take a step back from Noah, when we take a step back from Adam and Eve, when we take a step back from Malachi—guys, we see a collage that points to one thing and one thing only. And that is Yeshua. And that's what the New Testament authors seem to believe as well: that everything that we see points to Yeshua.

Christ in Every Page

The Bible is a unified story written by man telling of God's message that testifies of God's pursuit to save his world and through that salvation be in ultimate communion with you. And this is done through the person of Yeshua—the human we should have always been. Through yielding our own flesh and desires to his reign, we stand in communion with the God of creation. And sometimes the Bible tells us that the life that we want to live is not something that stands for God's reign and we don't like it and we don't want to change, but that is part of the pledge that we take as Christians, as believers. We find forgiveness in the grace of God and we choose that we will submit, yield, and be transformed by the power of God through the salvational work of Yeshua so that he can katov—he can write his reign and his law on our hearts—that we would live out as beings that can only be described as new creations in Christ. Anything else is what the Bible is not.

And so worship team, you guys can come up. Please stand as we'll conclude services. I hope that this message was edifying. I hope that perhaps you can appreciate the scriptures and the word of God that he's given to you and charged so many, so many authors, so many scribes, so many collectors, so many compilers that he's commissioned so that you can have his word today.

A Call to Transformation

And I don't know where you're at today. Maybe you've always looked at the Bible as this magnificent thing. Or maybe you're saying that the Bible is actually something that's real and powerful and grand and something that we should take into account. And if we choose to do that, then maybe we're starting to realize that the Bible does say something about how our lives should stand for God and how we should be making the sacrifices of our flesh to live out the spirit that Yeshua has given to us. And if that's you today, I want you to know that guess what? That's all of us, and you can make a change. And you can make a change. So I don't know where you're at today, but please join us for worship as we conclude services. We have a prayer team on the left and the right. If you need prayer today for whatever reason, these are the people that will stand beside you and lift you up.

Almighty Father, our King, Father, we thank you for this time together. We ask that Father, you would continue to reveal the essence and the beauty of your word to us, that you would continue to allow it to teach us and transform our lives with wisdom into the faith of Yeshua, that we will grow stronger in you. We thank you, Father, for your salvation. We thank you for your covenant, and we thank you for the invitation to transform our lives to obedience to you and your kingdom. In Yeshua's name we pray. Amen.

Shalom, I'm Matthew Vanderels and I hope you enjoyed this message. Founded in Truth exists to build a community that bears the image of God and lives the redeemed life only Yeshua gives. If this message impacted you or if this ministry has been a blessing to you, we would love to hear from you. Send us a message through our contact form on our website and let us know how God has used this ministry to edify your faith and relationship with him. Don't forget to subscribe by clicking here. And if you'd like to donate to this ministry and be a part of what God is doing through it, you can donate through our website at www.foundingatruth.com or by clicking here.

Closing

We thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to next time. Shalom.

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