

# The Self-Attesting Authority of the Holy Scriptures (Part One)

By Jay Wegter

**God is the Author of human existence, of human relationships, and of the laws which govern those relationships. His laws come from His unchanging character.** The authority of God is evident in His power to command absolutely, and in so doing, to bind the consciences His creatures by His law. His authority is expressed in His holy determination to enforce the laws which He has made.<sup>i</sup> Thus, the ‘executive instrument’ by which God rules over His creatures is His infallible Word, the Holy Scriptures. God and His Word are ‘one’ in holy purpose and authority, therefore the authority of His Word is self-attesting.

**When we speak of Scriptures’ authority as being self-authenticating, we are stating that the Word of God has authority in itself, and consequently does not rely upon external sources to verify its infallibility.** The Bible is that authoritative test of all other truth claims in the world; no created authority can sit in judgment upon it. In terms of its authority, **“God says,” and “Scripture says,” are equivalent.** Notice the wording in Romans 9:17: “For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH” (Rom 9:17; Gal 3:8) (See Exodus 9:16).<sup>ii</sup>

Scripture is divine in that it is ‘God-breathed’—thus it is a transcript of God’s decree (His redemptive plan of the ages) and, divine necessity demands its fulfillment. **After His resurrection, Jesus said to His followers:** “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (**Lu 24:44; Acts 1:16; 2:24-26; 13:34-35).**<sup>iii</sup>

God stakes His own reputation on the infallibility and unbreakable character of the Scriptures. “For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name” (**Ps 138:2b**). *Pastor Samuel Waldron gives a striking illustration of the unbeliever’s futility when attempting to explain away the Bible’s internal witness to its plenary verbal inspiration.* Says Waldron, it is reminiscent of the story of a bespectacled researcher, who postulates about avalanches from the safety of his lab. With the help of diagrams and formulae he expounds from physics how every stone in an avalanche has a definite pathway that may be easily dodged and avoided by the proper presence of mind. But! An avalanche does not come at us stone by stone. It comes as an entire side of a mountain bursting upon us in a solid mass. So also, skeptics may think themselves smart as they dodge a couple of Bible texts, but the whole of Scripture is massive, all-encompassing in its eternal weight, divine authority, and infallible witness.<sup>iv</sup>

**500 or so years ago, the Protestant Reformers faced the challenge of proclaiming the absolute divine authority of the Scriptures without setting themselves up as the essential authority which validated the testimony of the Scriptures.** In other words, they were not about to fall into the same trap as the Roman Catholic church did which arrogated to itself the role of validating the authority of the Scriptures by its claim of ecclesiastical authority. Thus, in order to carefully respond to the issue of the Scriptures’ self-authenticating authority, the Reformers explained a trilogy of three doctrines in regard to divine revelation.<sup>v</sup>

**First, the self-authenticating character of general revelation.** General revelation

(God's testimony in creation and conscience) affirms that even depraved men cannot wholly escape the voice of God. **Psalm 19** speaks of God's general revelation, for God has filled the creation with 'sermons without words'.

The heavens are telling of the glory of God;  
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.  
Day to day pours forth speech,  
And night to night reveals knowledge.  
There is no speech, nor are there words;  
Their voice is not heard (Ps 19:1-3).

**General revelation affirms that all men are immersed in a veritable 'sea' of divine revelation.** Everything from a starry night, to the laughter of a baby, to the joy of human love is shouting the perfections of the Creator. Through the creation, God is ceaselessly authenticating Himself to man. Daily, a man's **conscience** continually speaks; either excusing or accusing all of his ethical behavior. "For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus" (**Rom 2:14-16**).

All men are without excuse for their suppression of God's truth which is declared in general revelation. Thus, the witness of general revelation is self-authenticating (true of the illiterate who cannot read the Bible, and true of the heathen who has never seen the Bible).<sup>vi</sup>

**"The testimony of Scripture is clear. For, it is not that by general revelation men may have a vague notion of some undefined deity. It is rather that men are immediately confronted with a clear unavoidable revelation of the true living God"** (Waldron). Therefore, if general revelation is self-authenticating, how much more self-attesting is special revelation as it is inscripturated in the Bible? For, in special revelation (the Word of God), our Creator speaks to us as God, approaching us directly in His precise words.<sup>vii</sup>

**Second, the self-authenticating character of the Holy Scriptures.** The Word of God asserts of itself that it is living, active, and infinitely powerful. "Is not My word like fire?" declares the LORD, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock?" (**Jer 23:28-29**; Lu 16:27-31; Jn 6:63; 1 Pet 1:23-25). As His creatures, the Creator's Word searches the depths of our hearts.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (**Heb 4:12-13**).

**The self-attesting character of the Scriptures is seen in the demand that all who hear them are required to immediately believe their message.** "For He says, 'AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU.' Behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION" (**2 Cor 6:2**).

Confidence in the truth of Scripture is required of saving faith. As was the practice of the Apostle Paul when He preached on Mars Hill, we bring the gospel to men unproven (unproven by corroborating facts external to Scripture). “Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead” (**Acts 17:30-31**).

**The apostle Paul did not organize a Holy Land tour for his Athenian audience to view the empty tomb of Christ in order to corroborate the gospel message.** No, the self-attesting nature of Scripture is clear; God requires immediate faith in the gospel message. As Waldron states, “Therefore, it is not required to bring with the Scriptures reasoned dissertations and external arguments in order for the Scriptures to bring about faith.”<sup>viii</sup>

***The Scriptures are sufficient in themselves to warrant the confidence in their truthfulness which is required for saving faith.*** Our Savior underscored the self-attesting authority of Scripture when He proclaimed: “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment *as to* what to say and what to speak” (**Jn 12:48-49**).

The apostle John also testifies of the Scriptures’ sufficiency, “. . . these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name” (**Jn 20:31**). In fact, to suggest that sinners must be convinced by external arguments is a position which undermines the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture.<sup>ix</sup>

**Third, the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the Scriptures.** The complete assurance that the Scriptures are the infallible Word of God is obtained by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. This begs the question, if the Scriptures are self-authenticating, then why do the majority of people disbelieve? The answer addresses the necessity of the testimony of the Spirit. For, sin (human depravity), perverts human intellectual endeavor in the things of God. Fallen men and women are studious truth-suppressors. They do not wish to acknowledge their utter dependency and total accountability to their Creator. “For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (**Rom 1:21**; see also Eph 4:17f-21ff.).<sup>x</sup> As a consequence, they treat special revelation in the same way that they treat general revelation, by suppressing its clear truth.

***The natural man (man in his carnal state) is blind to the glory of God; only the Spirit can penetrate that blindness.*** The Spirit, by means of the new birth, removes the evil ethical disposition which blinds to the light of divine revelation. “For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (**2 Cor 4:6**).

***Therefore, the Spirit’s testimony regarding the Word is an ethical operation.*** Man’s decision to bow before Christ in trust and repentance is not separate from who and what a man is. Jesus said that men “can’t believe” when they “receive glory from one another” (**Jn 5:44**). Jesus ties believing to other moral acts. Is saving faith the ‘one thing’ a sinner can do? Does it originate from a tiny island of righteousness inside a man’s inner world of depravity?<sup>xi</sup> Not so, “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to

His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit” (**Titus 3:5ff.**).

***The Spirit’s enlightening work is not a new revelation in addition to the Scriptures, it is the granting of a new nature.*** The Bible teaches that if a man is to think correctly, he must be right ethically, for the mind of man is not a morally neutral reasoning faculty. “Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power. . .” (**Ps 110:3**; also, 2 Tim 2:25; 3:7; Jn 10:26-27).<sup>xii</sup>

***A man’s intellect will always gravitate toward a set of presuppositions which reflect the sinful commitments of his heart.*** The natural man, due to his depravity, is doggedly committed to personal autonomy (a spirit of independence)—that reality shapes his heart commitments.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest (**Eph 2:1-3**).

**The testimony of the Spirit is necessary if a man is to exercise faith, repentance, fear of God, and obedience to the will of God.** These responses to the Word of God are evidences of the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit (the new birth). For, the Spirit creates faith in the Scriptures, enabling us to see and savor, and understand divine truth. “For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (**Phil 1:29**). Our Lord informs Peter that the ultimate source of his confession of faith is attributed to God. “And Jesus said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven’” (**Mt 16:17**).

“We can see from this trilogy of doctrines that the whole effort to discover external attestation of the Bible’s authority is misguided. Authority cannot rest upon an infallible church or an [infallible] historical expert. God has spoken, the Bible itself being the Word of God; therefore, the highest possible attestation is the Bible’s own witness of itself.”<sup>xiii</sup>

***John Piper notes that divine glory figures largely in the entire theme of the Word of God and is endemic to its self-attesting authority.*** Saving faith involves faith in God’s self-authenticating glory—divine glory that is ‘reflected’ in the face of Christ (as we saw above in 2 Corinthians 4:6). How do we know God exists, that He is all-powerful, beneficent? According to Romans chapter one, and Psalm 19, we are responsible to see this glory; there is no excuse to not see this glory. How did Jesus’s followers know Jesus is the Son of God? The disciples saw this divine glory face to face. And, they impart this glory of Christ to us through their words inscripturated in the Bible.<sup>xiv</sup> Their testimony is:

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him* (**Jn 1:14-18**).

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ (**1 Jn 1:1-3**).

***The fact that people do not see this glory in the gospel so as to be saved is blameworthy, and evidence of a hard heart.*** “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God” (**Jn 3:19-21**).

***We can't see this glory without God's help, because we are lovers of darkness, and our works are evil.*** Due to the deception of sin, we loved the ‘cell’ in which we were chained. We kissed our shackles and gladly viewed the drawings on the wall of our cell as true glory, even though it was a masquerade; that is our blindness.<sup>xv</sup> For, Scripture says, “Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures” (**Rom 1:22-23**).

***What must happen in order for us to be liberated from our prison of sin is that divine glory in the face of Christ must shine into our dark cell, revealing the knowledge of God.*** The answer to our darkness is His shining into our hearts. It does not mean that there is nothing we can do until then. For, we are commanded to seek God as He is revealed in His Word. “Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (**Is 55:6-7**).

Paul was sent with the gospel to the Gentiles, to open their eyes (**Acts 26:18**). The power of the Scriptures in the hands of the Spirit convinces us of a peculiar, unique glory. This utterly unique glory of the Lord Jesus Christ convinces us that the Word of God is divine in origin.<sup>xvi</sup>

***In what ways is the glory of Christ a unique, self-attesting glory? Answer: the majesty of the glory of Christ is expressed in His meekness and His greatness.*** He is Lamb and Lion; a lamb-like Lion and a lion-like Lamb. He manifests a glory that is our supreme treasure. What other king gives His life's blood to make friends and heirs of His enemies? “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (**Rom 5:10**). What other king ever willingly suffered agony, death, shame, and reproach in order to form a kingdom of former rebels? “Therefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach” (**Heb 13:12-13**).

***He saves and serves us in the act of manifesting His glory—that is a peculiar and utterly unique glory; a glory which is self-attesting.*** “He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved” (**Eph 1:5-6**).

*Every human being has an ‘internal template’ shaped for the communication of this glory.* For, we have been created in God’s image to ‘run on God’ so to speak. Augustine said it well in his iconic quote, “You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.” This is why we know, when we are faced with Christ in the Word of God, that we have met divine glory. When confronted with His Word, there is a correspondence between general and special revelation—a kind of cohesion that beautifully and ineffably joins the communication of God in general revelation with special revelation in the gospel of Christ.

**In one of her letters, Helen Keller (who was blind and deaf from birth) told Bishop Brooks that she had always known about God, even before she had any words.** Even before she could call God anything, she knew God was there. She didn't know what it was. God had no name for her -- nothing had a name for her. She had no concept of a name. But in her darkness and isolation, she knew she was not alone. Someone was with her. She felt God's love. And when she received the gift of language and heard about God, she said she already knew. Phillips Brooks was thrilled by this. This was the God he knew.

*God’s glory in Christ is manifested in His meekness—in the depth of His self-giving in His humiliation.* “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (**Phil 2:5-8**).

The believing sinner has become ‘captive’ to the glory of His majesty. “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen” (**Jude 24-25**).

*The Bible’s self-attesting message comes to you in a letter from the Creator of the universe to connect you with the heart and mind of a divine Person.* John Piper notes that in His Word, God reveals His eternal purpose, “to fill the world with God-imaging images.” That is our destiny; believers are saved to be His glory reflectors. But, we see in a mirror dimly now, but then, face to face. (**1 Cor 13:12-13**). “We are fallible but submitted to an infallible book.”<sup>xvii</sup>

*The natural man is a rebel against God’s glory. His refusal to submit to the authority of God’s Word is tantamount to refusing to submit to God Himself.* But, the Word of God catches him in his folly. For Scripture flows from God’s omniscience, searching hearts and minds and revealing motives. The Bible tells us why the natural man’s epistemology (*his method of knowing*) is horribly flawed. It is because his ultimate reference point is himself and not God Almighty. Scripture authoritatively binds consciences and reveals their contents.

**Thus, there are at least five internal Epistemological Tests in Scripture which expose the faulty epistemology of the natural man.** (Epistemology is that branch of religious philosophy which examines *how we know what we know with certainty*.) Our Lord stated that the human condition is one of loving darkness (**Jn 3:19-21**). Fallen man pretends to be an objective truth-seeker when he takes a posture of standing in judgment upon the Word of God. But in every case, it the Scriptures which are actually doing the judging. Therefore, what we see

in each of the following epistemological tests is NOT that the Scriptures must measure up to the inquirer's standards, but that the reader himself is being examined by the Scriptures.

**TEST ONE – Do you fear God as He is revealed in Scripture? “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov 1:7).** Knowledge, particularly divine truth, has only one trustworthy God-approved gate of entry, the fear of the Lord. Without the fear of the Lord man is unable to enter the realm of divine truth. Without that reverential awe of God, man sentences himself to be shut out of the knowledge of divine truth. And, he thereby dooms himself to wander on a shoreless sea of relativism and uncertainty. Now, to fear God is to say the same thing about evil as God does, and to “turn away from evil” (Prov 3:7). The reverential fear of the Lord is what is due God as our Creator. “Who understands the power of Your anger and Your fury, according to the fear that is due You?” (Ps 90:11). Those who fear the Lord tremble at His Word, knowing He is as good as His threats and His promises, and that His reputation is joined to the immutability of His Word. “But, to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word” (Is 66:2b).

**TEST TWO – Have you placed your mind under the mind of God.** The natural man rejects the entire concept that he needs God to find God. For Scripture says the light we need for this ‘search’ is supplied by God. “For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light” (Ps 36:9). God has clearly stated that Christ came to explain and unfold the knowledge of God to man. “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*” (Jn 1:14, 16-18).

If we attempt to gain understanding of God and the reliability of His Word while doubting Christ's testimony of God, and God's testimony of His Son (1 Jn 5:9-12), we will be settling for error, and its consequence, confusion. Christ is the divinely appointed means of knowing truth and knowing God. Christ proclaimed that we must listen to Him in order to know the truth, be of the truth, and be delivered from sin's grasp by means of the truth. “So, Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free’” (Jn 8:31-32).

This test sets forth the relational dimension of truth. One cannot be in possession of the truth unless one is in relationship with Jesus Christ who is the truth incarnate. Christ is not only revealer of God and the authoritative spokesman for God, Christ is also the exact representation of God's nature: “And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3).

To pass this test is to submit to Christ's epistemic Lordship, and thus to the ultimate Source of knowing. For, He is God's light to the world (Jn 8:12). And in Him are “hidden all the treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3). As the eternal utterance of God, all Scripture is truly the Word of Christ. “The Word (eternal utterance) became flesh” (Jn 1:14).

**TEST THREE – Do you hate your personal sin and your natural love of darkness?** “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God” (**Jn 3:19-21**).

Jesus blistered his hearers in John 3:19-21 by exposing the falsehood of their professed objectivity. Our Lord stated that the love of darkness is completely antithetical to the love of the truth. In so doing, Christ enthroned the central discriminating epistemological test: love of sin kills objectivity—knowing is inseparable from the commitment to do God’s will. Either we love the truth and are constantly repenting of sin and putting it to death because we want all of our behavior to be conformed to the truth. Or, we love our sin and therefore eschew the truth, twist the truth, and suppress the truth. The two positions are mutually exclusive. One’s orientation towards sin completely and comprehensively conditions one’s approach and orientation to God’s truth. Love of darkness is manifested in the suppression of God’s truth.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures (**Rom 1:18-23**).

**TEST FOUR – Are you willing to do God’s will as revealed in His Word (Jn 7:17)?** Jesus’ opponents accused Him of a multitude of things: demon possession, selfish ambition, Sabbath-breaking, false teaching, etc. In John 7:17, rather than choosing to offer an extended personal defense, Jesus sets forth an epistemological test for His listeners which highlights the self-attesting character of Scripture. If a person passed the test, it would produce certainty that Jesus’ message was infallible and divine. Here is the test: Are you willing to do the Father’s will as it is revealed in His Word? “If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself” (**Jn 7:17**).

Again, Jesus is focusing upon the ethical nature of truth. One’s relation to the truth is a litmus test of the contents of the heart. The person willing to do the will of the Father (*love God and neighbor as commanded in Scripture and love the One born of Him—1 John 5:1*) will see a perfect correlation between Jesus’ identity, His message, and the Father’s will.

**TEST FIVE – Do you reject the conventional wisdom of this world and rejoice in God’s infinite wisdom in the cross?** God’s stated purpose in history is to humiliate human wisdom. God is precipitating a clash between the world’s wisdom and His own wisdom in the cross of Christ. God has made the cross a destroyer of human wisdom and its folly. The cross is regarded as weak and foolish by the world, but it is the power and wisdom of God concentrated



in one event and towering over the human intellect. “For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, ‘I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.’ Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? (1 Cor 1:18-20).

Thus, the cross is the great watershed, the continental divide which separates impotent transitory wisdom from eternal wisdom. So why does this constitute an epistemological test? The answer is summed in the beginning clause of **1 Corinthians 1:21**, “For since in the wisdom of God, the world in its wisdom did not come to know God.” In other words, divine wisdom is at work in this exhibition of the folly of conventional wisdom. Those who subscribe to human wisdom will fail to know God and the truth of Scripture because they have chosen the world’s wisdom and not God’s infinite wisdom in the cross. Therefore, their anti-God bias remains.

**These five internal epistemological tests of Scripture function as a powerful diagnostic tool to show the unbeliever that the posture of his heart is not that of a truth-seeker, but a truth suppressor.** No man will be able to say on the last day, “I did not know the Bible was the very Word of God Himself.” Truth is ethical, therefore, inseparable from its moral base and the holiness of its Author. Thus, to expose the moral fallacies of the unbeliever is a valuable pre-evangelism that strikes at the stony soil of the natural man’s heart.

The good news of the gospel is the answer to willful spiritual blindness. For the gospel comes bringing the very power necessary to open the blind eyes of the helpless sinner that he might behold the glory of God in the face of Christ. “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” (**Rom 1:16**). “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (**Jn 1:12-13**).

#### Endnotes:

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<sup>i</sup> R. C. Sproul, “Christian Ethics,” Christian Living Teaching Series, 1996, Ligonier Ministries

<sup>ii</sup> Samuel Waldron, *A Modern Exposition of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith*, p. 36.

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>v</sup> Ibid, p. 38.

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid, pp. 39-40.

<sup>vii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid, p. 41

<sup>xi</sup> Tom Wells, *The Moral Basis of Faith*, p. 6

<sup>xii</sup> Waldron, p. 41

<sup>xiii</sup> Ibid, p. 42.

<sup>xiv</sup> John Piper, *A Peculiar Glory* (Kindle Edition)

<sup>xv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xvii</sup> Ibid.