

Caribbean Graduate School of Theology
Biblical Theology

Lecture 1 – The Doctrine of the Word of God

January 2021 - Sheldon Campbell

Grudem (1994) explains,

1. The Word of God:
 - a. “The Word of God” as a Person: Jesus Christ (p. 47).
 - i. John 1:1, 14
 - ii. Revelation 19:13
 - b. “The Word of God” as Speech by God (p. 47)
 - i. Genesis 1:3
 - ii. Psalm 33:6
2. God’s Words of Personal Address (p. 48)
 - a. Genesis 3:16-19
 - b. Exodus 20:1-3
3. God’s Words as Speech through Human Lips (p. 48)
 - a. Deuteronomy 18:18-20
 - b. Jeremiah 1:9
4. God’s Words in Written Form (the Bible) (p. 49)
 - a. Exodus 31:18
 - b. Exodus 32:16; 34:1, 28

Griffiths (2017) notes the following:

- God speaks through His Word (pp. 9-10)
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:16
 - b. Hebrews 1:6, 8
- God acts through His Word (pp. 10-12)
 - a. John 12:47-48
 - b. Isaiah 55:10-11
- God is encountered in His Word (pp. 13-16)
 - a. John 15:4-7
 - b. John 17:6-8

The Canon of Scripture (Grudem 1994, 54-72)

The Canon of Scripture “is the list of all the books which belong in the Bible” (p. 54).

The Old Testament Canon (pp. 54-59)

Jesus and his disciples seemed to agree with the list of Old Testament books, and exclusion of the Apocrypha (pp. 57-59).

The New Testament Canon (pp. 60-72)

The New Testament writings of the apostles and their endorsement of others’ writings became the canon. Paul of Luke-Acts; Peter of Mark, etc.

The Four Characteristics of Scripture (Grudem 1994, 73-138):

1. The Authority of Scripture (pp. 73-89)

The Authority of Scripture “means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God” (p. 73).

All the Words in Scripture Are God’s Words:

- This is what the Bible Claims for itself (pp. 73-77)
- We Are Convinced of the Bible’s Claim to Be God’s Words as We Read the Bible (pp. 77- 78)
- Other Evidence Is Useful but Not Convincing (p. 78)
- The Words of Scripture Are Self-Attesting (p. 78)
- Objection: This Is a Circular Argument (pp. 78-79)

The Truthfulness of Scripture:

- God Cannot Lie or Speak Falsely (pp. 82-83)
 - Titus 1:2
 - Hebrews 6:18
- Therefore All the Words in Scripture Are Completely True and Without Error in Any Part (p. 83)
 - Psalm 12:6
 - Proverbs 30:5
- God’s Words Are the Ultimate Standard of Truth (p. 83)
 - John 17:17
- Written Scripture Is Our Final Authority (pp. 84-85)

The Inerrancy of Scripture (pp. 90-104).

Inerrancy means that the Bible does not contain errors, while the infallibility of Scripture means that it cannot contain errors. Grudem defines Inerrancy of Scripture as where “Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact” (p. 90)

- The Bible Can Be Inerrant and Still Speak in the Ordinary Language of Everyday Speech (pp. 91-92).
- The Bible Can Be Inerrant and Still include Loose or Free Quotations (p. 92)
- It Is Consistent With Inerrancy to Have Unusual or Uncommon Grammatical Constructions in the Bible (p. 92)

2. The Clarity of Scripture (pp. 105-115)

The Clarity of Scripture “means that Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God’s help and being willing to follow it (p. 108).

- The Bible Frequently Affirms Its Own Clarity (pp. 105-107)
 - Deuteronomy 6:6-7
 - Psalm 19:7
- The Moral and Spiritual Qualities Needed for Right Understanding (pp. 107-108)
 - 1 Corinthians 2:14
 - James 1:5-6

3. The Necessity of Scripture (pp. 116-126)

The Necessity of Scripture means that the Bible is necessary for knowing the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing God’s will, but it is not necessary for knowing that God exists or for knowing something about God’s character and moral laws.

- The Bible is necessary for knowledge of the gospel (pp. 116-118)
 - Romans 10:13-17
 - 1 Timothy 2:5-6
- The Bible is necessary for maintaining spiritual life (p. 118)
 - Matthew 4:4;
 - Deuteronomy 32:47
 - 1 Peter 2:2
 - The Bible is necessary for certain knowledge of God’s will (pp. 119-121)
 - Jeremiah 17:9
 - Romans 3:10-11
- But the Bible is not necessary for knowing that God exists (pp. 121-122)
 - Psalm 19:1
 - Acts 14:16-17
 - Romans 1:19- 21
- Furthermore, the Bible is not necessary for knowing something about God’s character and moral laws (pp. 122-124).
 - Romans 1: 32,
 - Romans 2:14-15

4. The Sufficiency of Scripture (pp. 127-138)

The sufficiency of Scripture means “that Scripture contained all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and that it now contains everything we need God to tell us for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly” (p. 127) .

- Salvation
 - 2 Timothy 3:15-16
 - 1 Peter 1:23
- Living the Christian Life
 - 2 Timothy 3:16
 - Psalm 119:2
- We can find all that God has said on particular topics and answers to our questions (p. 128).
 - Romans 8:9, 14, 16.
 - Galatians. 5:16-18, 25.
- The amount of Scripture given was sufficient at each stage of redemptive history (p. 129).
 - Deuteronomy 29:29
 - Deuteronomy 4:2