

W157_It_Is_Written.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the chapel of the opened book. Under the covering title of Christian Fundamentals, we we've already had eight studies which were the nature of stepping through the Scriptures. We now come to a second series which is going to consider the scriptures themselves, their canonicity, their inspiration and various other phases and aspects of this wonderful book. It is our custom at this meeting to read a portion of scripture together. So those of you who are listening, would you switch off for a moment or two and read with us Psalm 119 verses 1 to 32. You noticed a rather good piece of Anglo-Saxon in verse 31. I have stuck unto thy testimonies. Some people stick at them, of course, and that's a very different proposition. And then it's very seldom that one would wish to have an enlarged heart. But you see, spiritual things are different from physical. If you've got an enlarged heart, don't run for the train. But if you've got an enlarged heart in the spirit, you can run for all your worth. So there's the two things to remember. We stick to the Word of God and we can run because he has enlarged our heart. Now, in our earlier studies along this line, we. Just took strides through the scriptures by means of a diagram. Ten steps through the Word of God. This seems rather asking for trouble when there are 66 individual books in the Scriptures and you're going to demonstrate the purpose of the ages and the teaching of Scripture by looking at ten books out of them.

[00:01:56] The same time. I think you will sympathise with the reason why that was devised, because there are some today even still, who are bewildered by the massive detail that has to be considered. I mean, you imagine a young believer coming across the genealogy of the Dukes of Ether in the book of Genesis and suddenly reading this and are is he who went out and found his master's mules when he was feeding his asses? It stuck right in the middle of a genealogy and he looks at it. What's that got to do with me? I haven't got the answer to it yet, friends. But I know this that I dare not suggest anything is irrelevant because as sure as you do, you'll be studying the words. That's the very thing that we are wanting. I have my own private in the background idea that the mule is not a thoroughbred. And I'm thinking about the dukes of ether, but we'll leave that to speak for itself. Well, now we're coming to the book itself. And again, how are we going to approach this? Some may say all you got to do is to believe the scriptures. But that isn't true, friends, because it's just as easy to believe a lie as it is to

believe the truth. In fact, it's easier sometimes God doesn't tell you and me to say, Shut your eyes and just sit down and say, Oh, I believe.

[00:03:24] Oh, no. He has loaded this book up to a certain point with evidences, and he expects you to weigh them. You will never get a revelation from heaven that will see her onto your very soul. The inspiration of Scripture. You'll get it just as you do the witness that men give you. But it says this If you believe the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. Surely if once a book comes to you with the words running right through it like a pulse, thus said the Lord, thus saith the Lord, and in between those many statements, thus saith the Lord, it is always on the side of righteousness and always on the side of truth and never on the side of deception. I think you'd have to admit that he is a remarkable book that never varies from the first chapter to the end in the last chapter. Who is it that there are destined for the second death? The fearful and the unbelieving and whosoever liveth and maketh a lie. He is a book that challenges the whole world with regard to the place that the lie and the truth occupy in its scheme of things. Well, now you will notice this chart in front of you. And by the time that this meeting is over, you may say, Well, why did you put it up? Well, I'm not going to refer to it very much, friends.

[00:04:55] The only thing is I wanted to make sure that I should refer to another one of these tape recordings. I think it is number nine of the series that we have in hand where we spent the whole of the time at our disposal in presenting the Temple of Truth and spoke about the fact that Josephus and others of the same period have drawn attention that although the number of books in the Old Testament that we have in our authorized version is exactly the same number that they have in the Hebrew Bible, their association and distribution was a little different. So that where we have 12 individual separate books of the minor prophets, that only counts as one in a scroll in the Hebrew you see. So you're not losing losing a book, but you're losing numbers. At the point is this, that if you take each separate book as it stands, you get 66 books in the Bible. If you take them according to the computation of the, as Joseph says, the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, then you have 49 books, which of course is a significant number. And we just now read together, did we not? Psalm 119 and nearly every one of you I know realizes that this is an alphabetical psalm and you have over the top of each one of these stanzas, Aleph Beth Gimel, Daleth.

[00:06:39] And the first word of each one of those verses commences with that actual letter just in passing. The fact that God has gone out of his way to give us quite a number of acrostic Psalms and acrostic scriptures is because it's a valuable help to remembering the Scriptures. So it looks as though God wants to write them upon our memories. And this is one of the aids to do it. Well, now, the first thing that I think we will do. Is to turn, without giving exhaustive analysis or proof to two scriptures that must come from in any discussion or any attempt to demonstrate that the Word of God claims itself to be true. I'm turning, first of all to two Timothy Chapter three. There's hardly, hardly seems necessary to do it. But if I leave it out, it will be one of those things that I shall regret forever afterwards. So here we must start. Two Timothy 316. And one of the things I like to remind myself and others, particularly others and the others mean a special type of others. They say this idea of yours, of dividing the word of God, it's splitting it all up into pieces. I say, Oh, is that so? As in being very, very artful, of course, apparently introduced an entirely new subject. Say, brother, supposing you were limited to one passage of scripture only. To prove the inspiration of Scripture. Where would you turn? Roy says I should turn to two.

[00:08:30] Timothy 316. I said oh two Timothy 215 divides the Word of God all up into pieces. And two Timothy 316 says, The whole lot of it is inspired. Well, what sort of man was Paul then? You see the very book that says Divided is the very book that says it's given by inspiration of God. There is no other scripture which says it so plainly and so clearly. Now, this ought to be submitted to analysis. I ought to point out to you in verse 15 that the word scriptures means the actual letters. And in verse 16, the complete book out, Boy, down to you that the word scripture means that which is written and the word inspiration means that which is spoken. Well, I ought to do it, of course, when I've done it, haven't I? But you see, the point is that this is saying that what God said is what they wrote. If you ask me how, I don't know. But I do know this, that occasionally we have the information given to us. That I'll go immediately to the illustration. It will have to come this evening some time. That an unwilling. And a disobedient prophet. Could not help but speak what God intended. He should speak. He was a man who was sorely tempted. With money. They came. The men came to him and said, Our master has sent us and he will fill your house with silver because he may have been a figure of speech, but still good enough.

[00:10:06] If you only speak for him. You're a soothsayer, you're a prophet. And he said, I don't quite know. I don't think I'm. And then he did what I met some of God's people do, he said of a downright no. He said, I'll make it a matter of prayer. Have you ever been like that, friends? I think that's the worst use of prayer that ever can be. So now in your heart that you're wrong, and then you simply say, I'll make it a matter of prayer. God takes you at your word. And that man, although God said You mustn't go, said, Why, you'll go. But when you get there, you only speak what I tell you. And so they went through all the old rigmarole of seven altars and seven sacrifices, and he went out and he blessed the people. And the king was, of course, annoyed. But he said, I told you so. Would you see if we got that example? And there are others like Caiaphas, the high priest. If God says mean you to speak, you will speak. Well, if that's the case, how much more easy it is to believe that if a man's heart is in tune with the living God and God has given him that work to do, he won't be looking into his heart and wondering how the recording's taking place.

[00:11:18] It'll be going on and he'll sit back, as most of them did, and search their own writings, says Peter, to see what the spirit of Christ that was in them did signify when it spoke of his coming death and the glory that should follow. So there we have not a proof, but an evidence that the ones who had this this power were able to see it all the way through the Apostle Paul. He was writing scripture. He didn't know it. Possibly he was only writing a letter to Timothy. It turns out to be a part of all scripture. And he was saying that the other part of scripture that was outside of his own kin was given by inspiration of God. Then the other passage, which I must refer to is in two Peter Chapter one. The first passage is how was Scripture given? The second passage is how did it come? Second, Peter, chapter one, verse 20. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. Now, on the surface, leaving the verse quite by itself, that is good. Not one of us have any right to take the Scripture and use it as a buttress to bolster up some idea of our own. But that isn't what he's talking about. For, he says for the prophecy came not so he's talking about the prophecy came not what you're doing with it. What do you say? What about this word interpretation? Oh, well, it can mean interpretation, but it strictly means to unfold which interpretation does.

[00:13:02] So this is referring to the way in which the prophecy was unfolded by God to the men of God, for it came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And then the last word in this verse is the

word moved. You can move a person gently or you can be moved by a hurricane. And this is the word that means to be moved by a hurricane and is actually used in the acts of the apostles. When he describes the shipwreck in the 27th chapter of the acts where they simply had to undergird the ship. Strike the sail. And so were driven the very word used here. So if we're going to let those two men in the New Testament have a word to say, we say they at least had not the slightest hesitation in believing that the scriptures were inspired and the scriptures had no private unfolding. But it was God who made it known to the men whom he chose to be his scribes. And they put down the words he indicated to them. We could supplement that by other passages. You get one in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles that when Peter stood up, he said that as the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David Spake, and somebody might say, Oh, that was before the day of Pentecost.

[00:14:33] Well, if you wanted to gain in chapter three, you will find it. He still says it after the day of Pentecost as before. Well, now, that is one way in which we might and spent the whole evening. We could have spent the whole evening we have on those two passages and they were well worth it. And we may have to come back to them again from different angles. But I would rather take a wider sort of a sweep. And the first thing I would do is to just go through quickly a few passages of Scripture showing you how, in spite of the fact that when we've got the actual word here in front of us, it is the word of the living God to us. It came in different ways and different methods. God wasn't tied down to any one special individual course, so it might help us to see that according to the times in which it was written, or according to the state of affairs or according to the person who was going to be used. So God used this method or that method or the other, but it's the result with which we are concerned, not so much as to try to understand how he did it, for I don't suppose we should understand it until at least that day comes when we are assured we shall know even as we are now.

[00:15:50] Now, without turning to the Scriptures in the first case because of so many of them. I want you to remember this. Take, for instance, infant Samuel. Quite a little boy there. He's got his little place in the temple. And he hears a voice speaking to him. What? He doesn't hear a voice that frightens him. In fact, he goes up to old Eli, who is asleep and says, You called me. Oh, he said I didn't call you. Correct. But he goes back and he hears again and again. There's no bell. Comes down over his head. Like in the wireless. You see. Oh, making all going all like this. No, no. He says. Oh, but you did. I

heard you speak. Eli says here, this is something I got to hear. He said, Now, if you hear it again, if you hear it again, you say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant Hearath. And he wept and he heard it again. And poor little Samuel dropped out the word Lord. He said, Speak for thy servant Hearath. That's what I'm trying to say, that God could speak so much like an old man that the little boy thought it was Eli three times over. And of course, you get a man like the prophet. A whirlwind and I don't know what. And then a still small voice. I wonder what a still small voice really sounds like.

[00:17:21] You think you understand it till you try to explain it. But I dare say you know something about it. The consciousness. This has burned into your heart and mind and consciousness. Because we don't get the inspiration like that these men did. And the thing about it to remember is take the New Testament ones who believe the inspiration of Scripture. Paul his last letter says the words inspired and he was beheaded. Peter His last letter says the words inspire in Hebrews crucified our Savior. His last prayer, recorded in John 17, is thy word is truth. And he was crucified. These men were simply standing on a box and then packing up and going home comfortably. They were going on a road that led to martyrdom there. The men. They are the men who mean who give us the meaning of the word witness. G. Our English word witness, like so many words, are so broad and its meaning that you can go and sit at a football match and you'll be called witnesses. Well, you may be martyrs in a wrong sense, but a witness in the New Testament is a martyr. A martyr who is ready to suffer if needs be for the truth for which he stands. So that whenever you think about setting aside any one of these men and their testimony, stop and say, have I ever so stood for a truth that I be quite willing to walk that path that led to the beheading or the crucifying or the burning or the stoning that these men went through because they believed all scripture was given by inspiration of God? I think no.

[00:19:04] And then I've got a passage in. Oh, well, I'll just refer to that again in passing in one Chronicles 28. You will find that when the time came for God to commit to writing the specification of the temple that had to be built. We are told in one Corinthians, I think I've had a look at it. One Chronicles 2819 that it was in writing. One Chronicles 2819. He summing up. You'd have to look back over many verses. All this, said David. The Lord made understand, understanding, writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern. What does he mean by his hand upon me? Well, I don't know. David knew. David said I had it. A specification. You see. The God gave him not merely a

general idea, but gave him a working plan. And if he can do it with lines and angles, he can do it with words and letters. And then you know, of course, that God has not hesitated because He is Lord of all, to use the private lives of his people. When the first when the words were first written. Those terribly solemn words when they were first written. They belong to a man who is dead and gone. Lives years ago named David.

[00:20:43] And he said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? David said that and wrote it down. And in that psalm he said, They pierced my hands and my feet. He said that and he wrote it down. He said they cast lots upon my vesture He said that and wrote it down. And if you'd have spoken to him, he would have told you where it took place. It was something that he had gone through. Little did he know, perhaps at the moment that he was going to write down words which is greater than was one day going to actually utter and fulfilled them to the very letter. I always feel that the dying thief at the most wonderful exposition of the scripture that anyone has ever had in all their lives, they saw it being fulfilled in front of their very eyes. That's something, isn't it? You imagine that man listening to Psalm 22 and being a Jew? He most likely knew it, although he was a malefactor. I pierced my hands and my feet. And this says they've done it. They cast lots upon my vesture. They're doing it. So by the time the Lord got in Psalm 22, two the words the kingdom is the Lord Jesus. Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom. And He accepted the full interpretation of that part of Scripture anyhow. And of course, in the case of Hosea, the man has to go marry a rather an indifferent sort of woman.

[00:22:13] And the children that he has, he can't name them just as he likes. They've got prophetic names and all the affairs of that man's domestic life. Were, you may say, upset in order to give a picture of the more than upset that had taken place in the relationship between God and his people, the people of Israel? And then on other occasions, God has used a vision. One that comes to your mind in the New Testament is to break the prejudice that was very strong in the heart of Peter. While he was wondering what he could mean is a sheet coming down from heaven filled with all sorts of things which no true Jew would ever think of eating. And a voice says, Arise Peter Slay and eat. He says, Oh, not so, Lord. Have you noticed how many times Peter turns around and says, Not so, Lord. Not so, Lord. When the Lord was going to wash his feet, he said Just to wash my feet. You never wash my feet. Not. And when he revealed that he was going up to Jerusalem to be put to death. It is not so, Lord. It should not be with

thee. Isn't it good to know that nearly every time he said not so, The Lord said it's going to be nevertheless, Peter. But it's written showing you what sort of man God could use when he chose.

[00:23:30] He may have been a cross neighbor. Have you ever eaten with one? Still better than nothing. Perhaps most of us are a bit cross near day that the Lord has to use. Otherwise he would never have used us at all. So we have the vision and then the explanation. Cornelius comes along and he realized what it meant. Or only another chapter to a man of Macedonia. Oh, he says, I know why he couldn't preach the word in Asia. I know why we were stopped preaching in Bithynia. I know why we had to come on to the coast. We've got to cross to Europe. Man of Macedonia. But isn't everybody whose visions are going to be on a par with the inspiration of God? There are some people. I see them coming, and if I can get the other way quickly, I do. Oh, no. At the present moment, those sort of people may be an awful danger for the Word of God now is completed and merely visions. And all these things that enter the heart of the saint liest of us must never in any sense come into conflict or take the place of the scriptures which have been given and sealed and completed. Well, then another feature that perhaps I think I have time to to do would be to trace just in a few scriptures the way in which scrupulous care seems to have been exercised from the beginning to watch over this book, to care for it.

[00:25:05] Because that of itself will tell you that at least somebody thought it was worthwhile watching over and keeping. So I think perhaps we'll have time enough just to look at these scriptures and let them weigh with us also. We go back to the Old Testament and there are 1 or 2 in Deuteronomy, first of all. Deuteronomy 31, Deuteronomy 31, verse nine. Now the verse nine reads like this, and Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord. And then again in verse 24. And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take the book of the law and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against him. So you see, there was a definite provision made that that scripture that was then written was going to be put there by the side of that sacred ark to be preserved, the same as all the other furniture of the

tabernacle. And then in the 17th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, you see another provision made for the preservation of this book.

[00:26:40] 17th chapter and the 18th verse. This is to do with the king. And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him. And he shall read therein all the days of his life. It was an obligation on the part of the King of Israel as a part of his coronation, to write a copy of the Law of God. You see, it couldn't possibly die out, could it? King after king would be obliged by those who were Levites and others to do that part, to confirm their coronation oath, perpetuating this law of the Lord. And then moving to the book of Joshua. The eighth chapter and the 35th verse. We read these words, verse 34, and afterward he read all the words of the law. The blessings and the cursings all the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel with the women and the little ones and the strangers that were conversant among them. There is no other scripture written at the time, is he? But that was written. Every bit of it was read not merely to the leaders and the teachers and the elders, but the children and the strangers. There was no getting away from the fact that here again, the seal was being put upon the fact that God had spoken and this is what he has said.

[00:28:29] Well, then in the 24th chapter of the same book of Joshua, verse 26. Chapter 24, verse 26. We're getting near to the end of the book now. And so Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God and took a great stone and set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which we spake, which he spake unto us. And it shall therefore be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God, so that it is a solemn ritual with a stone for an evidence that this book had been perpetuated and intact right to the end of Joshua's life, right to the last chapter. Well, then one other feature with regard to the coronation of a king in the Two Chronicles. 23? I think it is, but I may have to check this. Uh. Oh, I think it's just in passing. Two Chronicles Chapter 23:11. Then they brought out the King's son and put upon him the crown. And gave him the testimony. And made him king. You notice that? You didn't say that they put the crown on him and made him king? No.

[00:30:10] I put the crown on him. They gave him the testimony. They made him king. And you will find that this is insisted upon. Although the king sometimes turned out a terrible, bad lot. Yet so far as their official capacity was concerned, they were custodians of the Word of God and it was a part of their very ordination. Well, then you will find that there were. Features like just missing out some. Take, for instance this. We've got two Corinthians chapter 29. Just look at that passage, verse 32, Corinthians 29, verse 30. Moreover, Hezekiah, the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing Praise unto the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph Hosea. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshiped. And you'll find other references in connection with Hezekiah to this question of sorting out the Psalms. He says, So shall they sing my songs in the House of the Lord? Because he was spared 15 years was added to his life, and he said that they would sing his songs. And I think you'll find those grouped under what we call the Psalms of the degrees, 15 of them in the book of the Psalms. Well, now once more, two Chronicles 34. So that's very near the end and very near to the end of history so far as the Bible is concerned. Two Chronicles 34, verse 14. It says in verse eight now in the 18th year of his reign.

[00:32:10] When he had purged the land and the house. He said she found the son of Azariah and Messiah, the governor of the city, and Jehoiada, son of Joash. And you see, they got a recorder there, same as we have, and the recorder to repair the house of the Lord his God. And then further down, when all this is done, accomplished. Verse 14. When they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the Lord Hilkiah, the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses. And we are told in the books of Nehemiah and Ezra, what a day that was when they discovered the Word of God again after the captivity. If you read the book of Nehemiah and Ezra, you'll see that Nehemiah evidently got something in his mind that he hadn't told anybody. He said, I didn't tell them why I did certain things. And he gets himself into an awful pickle, apparently, so that they have to take the very horse or the mule that he's riding back again and leave him by himself. I think he did it on purpose. And the moment he was left by himself, he went because he knew what he was looking for. He found the word of God still intact in the ruins of the temple. And that was brought out to the people. Oh, what a day when they all stood and listened all day to the reading and exposition of the Word of God.

[00:33:38] And so we find that it says they opened the book. Ezra and others stood upon a pulpit of wood that was made for the purpose. And he stood up before all the people, and he opened the book and all the people stood up because, oh, what a day it was when they found that God had written and it was preserved for them and they were once more, as it were, getting nearer to the calling that they received for unto them was entrusted the oracles of God. Well, now, just to bring to a conclusion a few words with regard to the terms we use. And if I don't get right through them before the end of the tape. Well, it won't matter because we can pick them up at any other time. The word inspiration. Theo Mystere is made up of words that mean Theos God. P and Q is the basis of the word to breathe. And so it means something which God breathed not merely wrote, but spoke. Two words for scriptures, one meaning the letters that were put over his head in Hebrew and Latin and Greek letters, and the other meaning scriptures or these scriptures par excellence. Because although anything that's written in the Greek language is a scripture, yet in the scriptures themselves, it's never used except for the writings, these scriptures, the graphene, the English word photograph or telegraph or lithograph, all those words with graf at the end mean to picture a thing, to draw it or to write it.

[00:35:30] And then we have the statement that comes all over and over again 35 times it is written. But strictly speaking, do remember that it's never in the present tense. Not it is written. It's. And if you're acquainted with the composition of a Greek word, the moment you see G in front of it, it warns you that this is not the present tense. It's what we call the perfect tense. Direct means it has been written. And if anybody says And what difference does that make? Go back in spirit to the days of the trial of our saviour, just this very week that we are considering our saviour has been brought for trial before Pilate. He has been accused of being handed over and they put over this cross, the King of the Jews, and they come into the presence of pilot and they say, Oh, don't say, don't say that. He's the king of the Jews. Don't say that. He said he was the king of the Jews. Well, then Pilot turns around and uses the perfect tense in the Greek language. He says, What I have written, I have written. And they didn't say, Oh, thank you. I'll go home and look up my grammar and see what that means. They cleared out quickly. I can tell you when a man speaks like that in authority, that's the meaning of it.

[00:36:51] Now, when our Saviour was tempted to the devil, he used it. He said, If thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they may be made bread, gig, raptl. It

hath been written, but who was it written about? Why was written about Israel in the wilderness? But it's still true. He says to this day, man shall not live by bread. Alone was true then it's true now. Regret die a living word, timeless word written by God, spoken in other tongues in other climates with people that we wouldn't know what to do with them if we met them. And yet all needing the same saviour and all being saved in the same way. And another few more of these meetings we shall be having before us in some form or another. An aspect of the Scriptures as a book. I didn't know whether to call this series God hath Spoken or it is written. So I didn't call them either. But what it comes to is this that we have to have both. For what is written for on one page of the Scripture we are practically told is what he spoke on another. Oh, let us not accept it as another little tidbit we've added to our repertoire, but rather bow our hearts in his presence and thank him for the condescension that stooped to use human language and human lips to make known these wondrous and gracious truths. The hearing of which means life eternal.