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## HARD TO BELIEVE - AUTHORITY ?

You're having a disagreement with someone. How do you determine who's right? Appeal to an impartial third-party authority. Google? Wikipedia? Encyclopedia? These might suffice for many human arguments. But what about questions of life or death? When the stakes are eternal?

People love to slice and dice all the gray areas. But what, in the final analysis, determines right and wrong? Can something be "true" for you but not for me? What yardstick decides - for everyone? Reason and logic dictate there must be an absolute standard of right and wrong. Without it, nothing really makes sense. And this standard must come from outside the human psyche - otherwise no one will ever submit to someone's else's standard. YOU want to be the authority. You'll argue *ad nauseum*.

Like it or not, we have an absolute authority. The very words of our Creator. It's called the BIBLE. It's what the missionary Paul was talking about in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "**when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God, which is at work in you believers.**" It's God's good news about revelation, redemption, and regeneration - life-changing words which have transformed human lives for millenia.

A recent nationwide survey - available at "[www.theStateOfTheology.com](http://www.theStateOfTheology.com)" - shows how confused people are. Nearly half agree that "*God is the author of Scripture*" and that "*the Bible alone is the written Word of God*" - but on the other hand, about half say the Bible does not have the authority to tell people what to do, and more than two-thirds of respondents say the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a real historical event. Relativistic thinking is confusing, isn't it!

Sure, some people say the Bible is just a man-made collection of morality tales to give you guidance. Others treat the Bible like a self-help book, full of suggestions to make you feel good. Others regard it as an unreasonable list of rules designed to make people feel guilty. Others, feeling morally superior, will tell you the Bible "contains" God's words - then proceed to tell you which parts they accept.

Let's be clear: the Bible does not contain God's word - **the Bible IS** God's Word. The very words of God, written down by more than 40 human authors over more than 1,600 years of human history. Not dictated, but superintended by God, through the personalities and personal experiences of human authors - so that the end result is exactly what God intends for human beings to know.

That's called "**revelation**" - meaning God makes known what otherwise could not be known. The 66 books of the Bible is the most unique volume in existence. It has been subjected to more critical analysis than any other ancient document. And it has the most stringent record of authenticity and integrity of any ancient writing. The Bible is the judge of science and history. It has never been disproved.

This means you can trust the Bible, like no other authority on earth. That's why it's also the number one bestseller. The most translated book in history - into nearly 3,000 languages. The translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic actually formed the English language now spoken around the world. It's all part of God's plan to reveal Himself to all peoples.

The Bible reveals God's plan of "**redemption**" - meaning how God saves people from their sinful rebellion against Him, and brings them into right relationship with our Creator, Redeemer, and Judge. And the Bible also reveals God's purpose of "**regeneration**" - meaning God's power for new spiritual life to anyone who puts their trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, as Savior from sin and Lord of their life.

Make no mistake, the Bible **REQUIRES** a **response** from you. It claims to be God's written Word. You must either receive it, or reject it. The stakes are eternal. If you are inclined to reject the Bible, you must answer the question - by what authority? Because so-and-so says? Because you say so? And how do these authorities stack up against the Creator of the universe - the One who changes lives by His truth?

If you **DO** receive the Bible as God's Word, then put your trust in Jesus, and live it out - according to His power. The Word of God transforms your believing, and behaving. The Word of God **WORKS**, for all.