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I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

The Lord delivered the revealed faith to his holy people "once for all." The faith was not partially revealed to the first century disciples to be supplemented, superceded or modified by additional or progressive revelations to later generations. They as we, were to "earnestly contend" for this one time delivered faith, not look for additional or further revelations.

The finality of God's revelation by the Bible is seen in the instructions disciples are given to "give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (Hebrews 2:1-4).

### **The Bible Warns of Other Revelations**

Since the Bible is God's complete and final revelation to men, it repeatedly warns about those claiming to have other revelations from God. The apostle Paul warned we are not to believe anyone who brings another revelation, even if it was from an angel. "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8-9).

Some argue their additional revelations are not other gospels but the same gospel. If this claim is true, then either their revelations simply repeat what the Bible already contains and thus, are not new revelations and useless, or teach

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new additional doctrines not contained in the Bible and thus, are other gospels condemned by the Bible.

The Bible ends with a warning and a curse to anyone who tries to add to or take away from God's book. "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18-19).

The apostle Peter warned of false teachers who bring in heresies. "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways..." (2 Peter 2:1-2).

Because of this danger, all teachers are to be tested (1 John 4:1; Revelation 2:1-2) to see whether they teach only "the doctrine of Christ" as revealed by the witnesses of Christ, the apostles in the Scriptures (1 John 1:1-5; 4:6; 2 John 9-11). The apostle John wrote, "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds" (2 John 9-11). Those who falsely claim to have received another revelation, transgress the doctrine of Christ, are false teachers and accursed.

The Bible is God's complete and final revelation and warns against other revelations. Those who claim revelations in addition to the Bible not only contradict and deny the Bible but are condemned by it.

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"contend earnestly  
for the faith which  
was once for all  
delivered to the saints"

Jude 3

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# Is the **Bible** God's Complete & Final Revelation?



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Wayne Greeson

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# Is the Bible God's Final & Complete Word?

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There are a number of different religious groups that claim to believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, but that it is not a complete and final revelation. They deny the "all-sufficiency" of the Bible as God's revelation to man by asserting other additional revelations from God.

The Catholic Church adds what it calls "traditions" and "private revelations" to the Bible. Some Catholics say their traditions come from "progressive revelation" down through the years, others suggest a progressive interpretation, but most all claim Holy Spirit guidance or inspiration for these traditions. Catholics also teach that individuals may receive "private revelations" from God. While these are not supposed to establish doctrine, much of the Catholic doctrine concerning Mary came from such revelations.

There are religious groups who similarly claim private revelations, guidance from the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals are not the only ones among this number as "charismatics" claiming Holy Spirit gifts and guidance are found in many denominations. Many of these claims are the consequence of the Calvinistic doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

Islam's Qu'ran claims the Bible is inspired by God, but that the Qu'ran is God's final revelation through the prophet Mohammed. Mormonism claims the Bible is inspired but corrupted, so Joseph Smith was divinely guided to interpret gold plates resulting in the Book of Mormon. The head of the Mormon church is called "the Prophet" and can receive new revelations from God. Similarly, Ellen G. White, founded the Seventh Day Adventist Church claiming to be a prophetess receiving modern day revelations and that her writings were inspired.

While these additional revelations vary con-

siderably in form and doctrine from one group to the next, the one doctrine all these religious groups agree upon is that the Bible is inspired by God. Therefore, if the Bible claims it is all-sufficient, complete and final, any and all subsequent claims of additional revelations are refuted and fall.

## The Bible Claims to Be Complete

The Bible claims to be the exclusive, final and complete revelation for all men. At the last supper before his crucifixion, Jesus promised his apostles that he would send them the Holy Spirit. Jesus told them "He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" and "He will guide you into all truth" (John 14:26; 16:13). Jesus' promise to give "all truth" to his apostles, if fulfilled, excludes any further future revelations of truth or progressive revelation, since "all truth" is complete truth and requires no additional revelation.

Did Jesus Christ, the Son of God, keep his promise and reveal to his apostles all truth? The apostle Peter said he did, "as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3). The apostle Paul confirmed "the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets" (Ephesians 3:4-5). The Lord revealed to his apostles and prophets in the first century "all things" giving them a complete revelation.

The apostles and prophets did not keep this complete truth to themselves. Paul told the Ephesian elders he had kept back nothing from them but declared to them "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:20, 27). Paul told the Ephesians later that "when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Ephesians 3:4). How could Paul make such assertions if God intended later revela-

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tions to complete His counsel? Since Paul, as an apostle received "all truth" and preached the "whole counsel of God" and his writings in the Bible enable us to understand his knowledge, then the Bible must be the complete Word of God.

Paul described the all-sufficiency of the Bible "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Since God gave "all Scripture" to make men of God in the first century complete and thoroughly equipped, then the Bible or Scriptures, themselves must have been completed in the first century. No further revelation is needed to make those who serve God complete since the completion of the Bible.

The Bible is God's complete Word in that it furnishes us: all necessary things Jesus did (Jn. 20:30-31); all necessary things Jesus taught (Acts 1:1-2); the certainty of Jesus' actions & teaching (Lk. 1:3-4); belief in Jesus as the Christ (Jn. 20:30-31); life in the name of Jesus (Jn. 20:30-31); fellowship with the apostles (1 Jn. 1:3); joy that is full (1 Jn. 1:4); protection against sin (1 Jn. 2:1); the blessings of God (Rev. 1:3); revelation of the mysteries of God (Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:3); the commandments of God (1 Cor. 14:37); understanding equal to Paul's (Eph. 3:4); a reminder of the apostles' preaching (2 Pet. 1:15); the teaching of the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21); criterion for recognizing true prophets (2 Jn. 10; Acts 17:11); knowledge of what will come to pass (Rev. 1:1); and "every good work" (2 Tim. 3:17). Jesus kept his promise and gave his apostles all truth which was then committed to the Scriptures to make God's Word complete in order to complete and thoroughly furnish Jesus' disciples.

## The Bible Claims to Be God's Final Revelation

The Bible not only claims to be God's completed revelation to man, but also God's final revelation. The apostle Jude wrote "Beloved, while

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