† Blessed is our God always, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. ... in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Through the prayers of our holy Fathers and Mothers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen. Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, You are everywhere and fill all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

† Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (three times).

† Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

A Refutation of The Chicago Statement   
on Biblical Inerrancy   
The Role of The Church

So the process is not a process of ascertaining inerrancy. It is a process of assimilating Truth and custodianship of Truth, as Scripture is handed from the Father to the Son to John to The Church.

“The things which you have heard from me among many witnesses; commit these same things to faithful people, who are able to teach others as well.” — 2 Timothy 2:2

*Light of the World*

The Bible is not the Light of the World. Jesus and His Church are the light of the world.[[1]](#endnote-1) The Bible is merely a good and true, yet imperfect, record of their work, an instrument, a guide for future application. Moreover, we have just learned that the Bible is of little use unless the Spirit teaches it to us.

“You are the salt of the earth: yet if the salt has lost His[[2]](#endnote-2) savor, with what will it be salted? It is consequently good for nothing, except to be thrown out, and to be trampled under men’s feet.

“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and hide it under a basket; rather, [they lift it up] on a candlestick, so that it gives light to everyone in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.

“Do not suppose that I have come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I have not come to destroy, yet rather to fulfil: for I say to you in all reality, Until heaven and earth pass, neither one iota nor one whisker shall in anyway pass from the law, until everything is fulfilled.[[3]](#endnote-3) Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; yet, whoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”[[4]](#endnote-4) — Matthew 5:13-19

“He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.”— Job 18:18

“The voice of your thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.” — Psalm 77:18

“The lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”— Luke 16:8

“Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, yet shall have the light of life.’ ” — John 8:12

“As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” — John 9:5

“Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbles not, because he sees the light of this world.” — John 11:9

“In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the glorious good news of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” — 2 Corinthians 4:4

“That you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world;” — Philippians 2:15

Nowhere is this truth more prominently displayed than in the first three chapters of Revelation: where each of the Asian churches is portrayed as a lampstand, a candle, a star, each with its own angel-messenger. This motif continues throughout Revelation until we reach its full brilliance in Revelation 21:11, 23-24; 22:5.

“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.” — Matthew 5:14

*Articles of Affirmation and Denial*

The articles of affirmation and denial specifically say:

*Article I*

“We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

“We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.”

*Our Refutation of Article 1*. Note how the properties of the Word of God, which is almost exclusively spoken,[[5]](#endnote-5) are so quickly applied to human writing. It is not a great leap from speech to writing; yet, it is an assumption that the authority, inerrancy, and power of God’s spoken Word, also may be applied to the human record of that Word: which equation, that God’s speech = Scripture, cannot possibly be true.[[6]](#endnote-6) Under Article 1, we are not discussing inerrancy or power; we are discussing authority exclusively.

We will continue to insist that the human record is fundamentally true within the limits of human capabilities, without insisting that it is necessarily inerrant. The human record cannot be perfected unless Jesus touches it: yet, we see elsewhere that Jesus did not concern Himself with very much writing.

We will also maintain that it is philosophically and theologically impossible for books of any kind to bear authority.[[7]](#endnote-7) Authority, immediate or delegated, is always an attribute of a living being. God, angels, demons, and humans all possess authority. We might argue that even animals and plants have the authority as well as the ability to grow and reproduce. Books are dead and have no such authority. The only way for a book to be brought to life is for a living being to bring the book’s record to life: the authority and power remain with the living being.

Note also how quickly authority, which was delegated from the Father to the Son to John to The Church[[8]](#endnote-8), is transferred away from the persons having authority, and magically conveyed to Scripture, which is merely the sign of authority.[[9]](#endnote-9)

The Holy Scripture certainly expresses authority; yet, people who devour and live by that Scripture possess the authority, not because the Scripture has magical power to infect lives, rather because the Spirit has power to cut the covenant into the heart. Expresses or possesses; it makes all the difference: people possess authority, Scripture merely expresses authority.

In handing the “little book” to John[[10]](#endnote-10), Jesus verifies that authority is most certainly delegated to the Apostles, who are very human, who are also the active participants[[11]](#endnote-11) in the writing of Scripture. Since Scripture so clearly has a human participant source from Moses to John, it is the height of arrogance as well as the ultimate absurdity to claim that the Apostles lack authority, or are not the “human source” of any authority recorded by Scripture. In fact, it is the Apostles, witnessed by the Church, who authenticate the Scriptures; not the other way around, as “Chicago” claims.

All of Scripture has mixed together, both a Divine and a human source; the authority expressed, not received, in Scripture stems primarily from God; yet, it is never separated from a delegated human agency. God intends to redeem the world; yet, He never acts without a human evangelist. Even angels, with all their power and glory, are mere messengers. The active agent, stemming from Christ, is always human; Christ and His Church are very much the source of the Scripture; Church and Scripture grew together side by side; Scripture merely records the authority of Christ and His Church.

Whatever else may be said about Scripture, men had their hands all over it. The Scriptures are our schoolmaster; yet, as the Spirit cuts the Covenant into the heart, we mere humans move beyond the Scripture to become living epistles of God: even though we are still very imperfect. Apostolic authority means real authority.

This article says the exact opposite of what the Scriptures themselves proclaim about Apostolic authority.

“Until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Spirit had given orders to the Apostles whom He had chosen:”[[12]](#endnote-12) — Acts 1:2

“They continued tenaciously in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”[[13]](#endnote-13) — Acts 2:42

“When the Apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received [Jesus] the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them:”[[14]](#endnote-14) — Acts 8:14

“When Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through laying on of the Apostles’ hands, he offered them money,”[[15]](#endnote-15) — Acts 8:18

“The apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. After much discussion, Peter stood up, and said to them,

‘Men and brothers, you know that from earlier days God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel, and believe. So God, the heart-knower, witnessed to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as also [He gave] to us: He made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by persuasion.[[16]](#endnote-16)

‘Now therefore, why do you[[17]](#endnote-17) test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?[[18]](#endnote-18) Yet we are persuaded that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we will be saved, even as they.’[[19]](#endnote-19)

“Now the whole crowd had become silent, as they listened to Barnabas and Paul, declaring how many signs and miracles God had done among the Gentiles through them. When they [came] to silence, James responded, saying,[[20]](#endnote-20)

‘Men and brothers, hear me [out]. Simeon [Peter] has declared how from the first God [Jesus] visited, [in order] to take from the Gentiles a people for His name. With this the words of the prophets agree, as it is written,

“After this I will return; I will rebuild the tent of David[[21]](#endnote-21), which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins; and I will set it up: so that the rest of mankind might seek the Lord, all the Gentiles, who are called by my name, says the Lord, who does all these things.”

‘All of His works are known by God from the beginning of the world: so I judge that we should not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles. Rather that we write to them, to refrain from the pollutions of idols, from adultery, from [eating] strangled things, and from [drinking or eating] blood: for Moses has from earlier generations those who proclaim him in every city, reading in the synagogues every Sabbath.’ ”[[22]](#endnote-22) — Acts 15:6-21

“Then it pleased the Apostles and elders[[23]](#endnote-23) with the whole church[[24]](#endnote-24), to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren:”[[25]](#endnote-25) — Acts 15:22

“Writing this by their hand:

‘The Apostles, Presbyters, brothers, and sisters,

‘To the brothers, and sisters of the Gentiles from Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia,

‘Greeting.[[26]](#endnote-26)

‘Since we heard that some from among our émigrés have frightened you with words, upsetting your souls, saying, “to be circumcised and to keep the law,” which we did not determine.

‘It seemed necessary to us, having come together unanimously, electing delegates to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men abandoning their souls for the name of our Lord Jesus. Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas; who are conveying the same things by voice: for it seemed necessary to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to impose nothing more on you [of] greater weight [than] these necessary things: to refrain from [drinking or eating] idol sacrifices, blood, and strangled things, as well as from adultery: from which protecting yourselves you will [have] excellent practice. Be made well.”[[27]](#endnote-27) — Acts 15:23-29

“As [the delegation] traveled through the cities, they delivered the dogmas to them to keep, being determined by the Apostles and Presbyters at Jerusalem.”[[28]](#endnote-28) — Acts 16:4

In the final analysis, the claim, “We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from … any … human source,” is a root and branch denial that Jesus, the perfect man, is the source, fulfillment, and interpreter of Scripture; is a denial of Apostolic authority; and is a denial that The Church is the Body of Christ.

“God, who at many times and in many places long ago, was speaking to the fathers by the prophets, in these last days, He spoke to us by [His] Son Whom He enthroned [as] heir of all things, through Whom also He created time;”[[29]](#endnote-29) — Hebrews 1:1-2

*Article II*

“We affirm that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

“We deny that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.”

*Our Refutation of Article 2*. Note that we have now moved from authority to norm, possibly meaning an oral or written standard. Among the Greeks the standards of knowledge appear to be ethos, logos, and pathos.[[30]](#endnote-30) In modern usage, norm refers to a central tendency, a mean, a median, or a mode; what most people are doing under the circumstance.

Which does the Bible profess to be? Is it the supposed ethos, or common knowledge of the Jews? Not hardly! Is it a collection of school lessons found in the Old Testament? Is that what you really think of the teaching methods of Jesus, who is the Logos, par excellence.[[31]](#endnote-31) If Jesus is the authoritative Logos, and He supremely is, how is The Church, His very Body, not the authoritative logoi? Or does the Bible everywhere emphasize faith as the norm? Yet faith or persuasion which shares the closely related root idea of pathos, experience, sees a norm of walking and growing with God, far beyond the written page, doesn’t it? For only a living being can be persuaded. Books are not able to have faith, are they? So is the supreme norm the Bible; or is the Holy Spirt who brings life and understanding to the Christian, who receives the gift of faith, and is thus empowered to walk by faith and not by sight: is that the supreme norm?

Hence, the meaning of norm is not explicit. We suppose it to mean that the Bible is some sort of guide, or a template for binding. Yet nothing is said about Who has the power to bind, namely the Spirit.

We have already shown that documents do not, in and of themselves have or exercise authority. Here, at least, Article 2 admits that The Church has authority. Yet if The Church does have authority; while the Bible only expresses authority, the point is already proved: Article 2 contradicts itself. Because this solution seems somewhat trivial, we won’t press it, we will search for something more profound.

Article 2 supposes an authority of Scripture; which, even though such authority cannot be applied to any document; neither does the document, the Bible yet exist as we know it. The Bible in the 33 AD context must be limited to the Old Testament, and even that has not yet been canonized according to many experts.[[32]](#endnote-32) When the first word of the New Testament is penned, by whose authority is it penned? Where is the real authority, in Christ who gave it, in the Apostle who wrote it, in the Spirit who empowered it, or in the ink on the page?

We have just concluded a discussion of the Jerusalem Council[[33]](#endnote-33) where the Apostles plainly did have authority and exercised it without question. The Jerusalem Council met before very much of the New Testament was penned. By this time any of the written words of the New Testament, which are now in the process of formation are penned under Apostolic authority. Indeed, we would throw out of the New Testament, any book or words that lack such Apostolic authority. So who has authority: Apostles or books? Who or what receives authority, the book, or those who devour the book by the Spirit. If the Old Testament is the sole authority in 33 AD, by what authority does the New Testament come to exist? Christ has died, ascended, and been enthroned. Is it not true that The Church, which is Christ’s true Body, has been delegated all of the continuing authority on earth?

For that matter, how shall we ever distinguish between creeds, councils, or declarations and the Bible itself, unless there is such a thing as Apostolic authority? We are not aware of anyone who claims that creeds, councils, or declarations record any authority greater than the authority of Christ witnessed in the New Testament: so before such a claim is made we should discover if it really exists. Almost all claims concerning creeds, councils, and declarations call them the servants of Scripture, so it is hard to see how anybody sees them as greater than or equal to Scripture. Again, none of the documents themselves have authority: they simply record and report the authority of living beings. A creed is a statement of faith, “I or we believe”, a prayer which has no authority beyond its confessors. A council is an official meeting which has no authority beyond its attendees. A declaration is a formal letter which merely specifies the authority of its signatory. All this discussion of, “authority greater than or equal to”, is complete nonsense.

Now we must delve more deeply into the nature of this Apostolic authority; emphasizing in greater detail the authority of The Church, its relationship to Apostolic authority, and see if any Scripture agrees with the affirmation and denial of Article 2. We are not merely looking to prove that The Church has authority, which is fairly easily proved. We seek to prove that The Church has custodial or any other authority over and above Scripture. We will rest our case if and when we find that the chain of authority either stops with something other than Scripture; or when we fail to find that Scripture, by itself alone, is ever stated to have authority. In either case, we will conclude that the authority of Scripture is a man-invented concept: thus without any validity.

“I also say to you, that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of Hades will not prevail against her.”[[34]](#endnote-34) — Matthew 16:18

“Yet if he would fail to hear them, tell it to The Church. Yet if he would[[35]](#endnote-35) also fail to hear The Church, let him be to you as an heathen and a tax collector.”[[36]](#endnote-36) — Matthew 18:17

“Summoning them, they ordered them never to make a sound nor to teach the name of Jesus at all. Yet Peter and John replying, said to them, ‘If it is just in the presence of God, to hear you rather than God, you judged[[37]](#endnote-37): for we are not able not to speak [about that] which we saw and heard.”[[38]](#endnote-38) — Acts 4:18-20

“Now electing among themselves[[39]](#endnote-39), presbyters according to [each] church, praying with fasting, they commended themselves[[40]](#endnote-40) to the Lord, in Whom they had been persuaded.”[[41]](#endnote-41) — Acts 14:23

“Now arriving at Jerusalem, they were received by The Church, the Apostles, and the presbyters, and they reported the whole of which God did with them.”[[42]](#endnote-42) — Acts 15:4

“So, attend to yourselves[[43]](#endnote-43), and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit placed you watchmen[[44]](#endnote-44), to shepherd[[45]](#endnote-45) The Church of God, which He acquired through His own blood.” — Acts 20:28

“For I, on the one hand, while being away from the body, yet on the other hand, being present in the Spirit, have already passed sentence, as being present, on that one working evil, in this way: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, at your convening[[46]](#endnote-46), and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit would be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”[[47]](#endnote-47) — 1 Corinthians 5:4-5

“If you have criteria that concern earthly physical life, seat the rejected in The Church [*to judge these criteria*].”[[48]](#endnote-48) — 1 Corinthians 6:4

“[The Father] placed all [things] under [the Son’s] feet. [The Father] gave [Jesus] head[ship] over all [things] concerning The Church,”[[49]](#endnote-49) — Ephesians 1:22

“That now the multifaceted wisdom of God might be made known to magistrates and authorities in the heavenlies through The Church,”[[50]](#endnote-50) — Ephesians 3:10

“Jesus gave [to] some apostle[ships], and [to] others [gifts as] prophets, evangelists, and shepherds-teachers: toward the complete preparation of the saints at a work of service, at house-building the body of Christ, until we all could arrive at the unanimity of persuasion, complete agreement about the Son of God, at finished man[hood], at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;” [[51]](#endnote-51) — Ephesians 4:11-13

“Thus exactly as The Church is subordinate to Christ, so also the wives to their own husbands in all [things].”[[52]](#endnote-52) — Ephesians 5:24

“[Jesus] is the head of the body, The Church: [He] is the prince, firstborn of the dead; so that He would become first-rank in all things.”[[53]](#endnote-53) — Colossians 1:18

“Now I rejoice in [my] experiences on your behalf. I fill up in my flesh those shortcomings of the pressures of Christ, on behalf of His body, which is The Church:”[[54]](#endnote-54) — Colossians 1:24

“Yet, we beg you, brothers and sisters: to see[[55]](#endnote-55) those weary from toiling among you, standing before you in [the] Lord, stimulating your thinking[[56]](#endnote-56); to respect them immeasurably in sacrificial generosity through their work.[[57]](#endnote-57) Pursue peace in yourselves. Yet, we challenge you, brothers and sisters, confront the disorderly mind-set, comfort the small-souled, carry the weak, be slow to anger toward all [taking the long range view of everything].”[[58]](#endnote-58) — 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14

“Yet if I should be detained, [I write] so that you could see how it is necessary to act in the house of God, which is [the] Church of the Living God, Pillar and Foundation of the Truth….”[[59]](#endnote-59) — 1 Timothy 3:15

“Let anyone who[[60]](#endnote-60) is weak among you have summoned the presbyters of The Church; let them have prayed over him, anointing him with olive oil[[61]](#endnote-61) in the name of the Lord:”[[62]](#endnote-62) — James 5:14

“If indeed you tasted that the gentle Lord, toward whom approaching, a living stone, certainly deliberately rejected by men, yet selected beside God, most valuable. These also as living stones, you are house-built, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to lift up spiritual sacrifices, well-pleasing to the God, through Jesus Christ. Thus, in the writing[[63]](#endnote-63) it includes,

‘See! I set a stone in Zion, a corner-foundation stone, select, most valuable. The one also trusting on Him could never ever be ashamed.’ ”[[64]](#endnote-64) — 1 Peter 2:3-6

“The one having an ear, let him have heard what the Spirit says in the churches,”[[65]](#endnote-65) — Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22

“I Jesus dispatched My angel to have evidenced to you these things upon the churches. I am the Root as well as the Posterity of David, the Star, the Lamp, the Dawn.”[[66]](#endnote-66) — Revelation 22:16

“I[[67]](#endnote-67) give evidence to all, hearing[[68]](#endnote-68) the words of the prophecy[[69]](#endnote-69) of this book; if anyone would impose on these [words], God may impose on him the stripes that are written in this book. If anyone would have cut off from the words of the book of this prophecy, God may cut off his part from the tree of life, of the holy city, and the writings in this book.”[[70]](#endnote-70) — Revelation 22:18-19

*Article III*

“We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

“We deny that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.”

*Our Refutation of Article 3*.

Article 3 scarcely needs refutation. Except for three instances of writing recorded in Scripture, the Word of God is that spoken by God which is revelation in its entirety. Moreover, the Word of God engraved on the heart by the Spirit is entirely revelation also. Note that revelation is always exclusively a miraculous Divine act. The spoken Word of God is revelation.

In the act human of writing and recording, revelation is made into something other than miraculous. At most we would call this a secondary level of revelation: for it is once removed from its miraculous Divine Source. Thus the Bible is a Divinely approved and unique witness of revelation.[[71]](#endnote-71) Yet the Bible itself was never a revelation, never becomes revelation in encounter, and never depends on the responses of men for its validity: the written word of God is not revelation at all. Only by using the most farfetched figures of speech would anyone ever dare to make such a claim about the written word of God.

This idea that the Bible depends on the responses of men for its validity, is the erroneous idea found in Lewis Sperry Chafer[[72]](#endnote-72), among all those who espouse canonical credibility for the Council of Jamnia[[73]](#endnote-73), and even in many confessions[[74]](#endnote-74) as a declaration of canonical books.

Strangely, we believe it is this last phrase which is correct, “We deny that the Bible … depends on the responses of men for its validity.” It alone is not refuted.

*Article IV*

“We affirm that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation.

“We deny that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God’s work of inspiration.”

*Our Refutation of Article 4*. Oddly enough, we cannot and do not refute Article 4. It seems fundamentally sound. God, Who spoke[[75]](#endnote-75) in human languages throughout history (Hebrew 1:1-2), expected human beings to listen. The incarnation makes the attempted thwarting of God’s Word and work, null and void, never even a possibility.

However, we do have one small caveat. The corruption of human culture and language through sin has done considerable damage to published Bibles as we receive them in our many respective human languages. Nevertheless, God’s work is still not thwarted: simply because He superintends everything with an ever-watchful eye, through the power of the Spirit[[76]](#endnote-76), so it is impossible for evil to ultimately prevail.

God’s use of language has also been threatened by those who claim that inspired languages exist. The idea of inspired languages makes the absurd false claim that God only speaks in Hebrew and Aramaic. The reality is that our omniscient Creator speaks in any and every language just as He wishes.

Most likely the speaking as well as the writing of Torah was in Akkadian: for there is no evidence that Hebrew even existed or was invented as a language before 1200 BC, which is quite troublesome if Moses wrote around 1406 BC. What languages were in common use in 1406?

*Article V*

“We affirm that God’s revelation in the Holy Scriptures was progressive.

“We deny that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.”

*Our Refutation of Article 5*. We cannot and do not refute Article 5 either. God’s revelation is most certainly progressive, and continues to be so with each and every sunrise. The wonders of God’s creation cannot be refuted, even though what we see is nothing more than the artifacts, the debris left behind from God’s speech.

A major feature or proof of a prophet’s genuineness of primary inspiration, not his normative revelation, is that it must be cohesive with everything that has gone before. The other main proof of a prophet’s genuineness of primary inspiration is that he/she must be accurate. If the prophet’s words do not cohere with prophetic precedent or are not accurate, that prophet is a false prophet, that prophet got information from somebody other than God.

Prophet built upon prophet, until John; after John, Jesus speaks, and Apostles write: yet, even Jesus is not free to deviate from prophetic precedent. We are not comfortable with calling this normative revelation: because normative revelation fails to look at the situation from an accurate historic viewpoint; normative revelation is too technical a theological expression to communicate accurately.

We do have one other caveat. The unguarded expression, “We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings,” is a roundabout way of declaring that the canon of Scripture is closed. This contradicts an earlier statement from Article 3, “We deny that the Bible … depends on the responses of men for its validity:” for if men have no such authority then men cannot declare the canon closed. Only God can close the canon, which takes us right back to Revelation 5.

However, this is not our immediate caveat. We are especially concerned that this sort of unguarded expression might cause people to neglect the secondary inspiration, the Bath Kol, also termed illumination, which enables each of us to read, understand, and apply Scripture; which is also the driving force behind every preacher and teacher who has ever lived. Without this secondary inspiration, we may as well all go home, the battle is lost.

Moreover, while we agree that revelation cannot be self-contradictory, we would not want this to be misunderstood as saying that Jesus could not have corrected the misinterpretation of revelation, which He certainly did correct.[[77]](#endnote-77)

None of this gives us warrant for stepping out in new directions on our own. So-called liberals want to authorize and approve abortion, euthanasia, and other forms of murder: these frequently think more highly of animals than human beings. The same crowd wants to authorize and approve homosexuality, adultery, fornication and the like. On the other hand, so-called conservatives seek to authorize and approve slavery to indebtedness, usury, employment cruelty, unfair wages, oligarchy, bias against poor and minorities at law, and a whole laundry list of other corruptions. All of these, both conservative and liberal are wrong according to the Bible. None of these can be approved on the basis of progress in revelation. None of these can be approved on the claim that the Holy Spirit has led us in a new direction: for no such new direction is possible. No nation on earth can escape the punishment of God, if that nation tolerates the flaunting of any of these things.

Are we not all sinners? Yes. Of course…. The difference is that some of us realize what horrible sinners we are, and go to bed at night weeping over our sins for the pain and suffering we have caused our neighbors and our world. Then, receiving the complete forgiveness of God; we sleep; we rise to a new day with every resolve, with every effort, with every hope, with every prayer that the Spirit will heal us and make us better. We are “ex-“ from whatever we were before.

“Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God. Yet, such were some of you: nevertheless, you are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” — 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a person sows, that he will also reap. Those who sow to the flesh will reap corruption from the flesh; those who sow to the Spirit will reap everlasting life from the Spirit.” — Galatians 6:6-8

Make no mistake, there is no middle ground in progressive revelation.

*Article VI*

“We affirm that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.

“We deny that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.”

*Our Refutation of Article 6*. The first flaw of Article 6 is that it dances dangerously close to the heresy of dictation. It also seems to fly in the face of historic reality. Moses was empowered to speak with, and understand God, face-to-face, as a friend, in a fairly normal, human like, conversation. To suppose that Moses, after a day of conversation and other work, transcribed the words of God word for word, is a bit farfetched.

A more accurate statement of affairs is not hard to find.

“For prophecy was not ever brought by human will: yet by the Holy Spirit, men, as they were swept along, spoke from God.” — 2 Peter 1:21

Many theologians explain this as meaning that, within the mystery of the work of the Spirit, prophets wrote in their own words; yet, in doing so, communicated the message of God accurately and truly, as the Spirit guided them. Other prophets or Apostles can and did express the same truth accurately using different words, which were also their own: for example, we have four very different Gospels, all discussing the same truth.

Scripture statements about the absolute fulfillment of Scripture cannot be pressed into service for a doctrine of inspiration.

The discussion of the parts and the whole is again a canonical statement that mere men have no right to make. The statement is not wrong; its flaw lies in our absolute inability as individuals to determine what is whole and what is parts.

Of course, we are not free to pick and choose whatever we like from what God said.

Luther came dangerously close to committing this error in his discussion of epistles of straw. Luther thought that he had canonical authority, which is definitely wrong. We are convinced that the last clause of Article 3 has it right, “We deny that the Bible … depends on the responses of [Luther or any other] men for its validity.”

*Article VII*

“We affirm that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

“We deny that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.”

*Our Refutation of Article 7*. No! No! No! A thousand times, No!

Primary inspiration is the spiritual gift that empowers and enables Moses and all the prophets, together with all the Apostles to hear, understand, and enter into the eternal conversation with God Himself. Moses spoke with God as a man speaks with his friend. Primary inspiration is the gift by which God through His Spirit, gave prophets and Apostles His Word: it has little to do with writing, writing was already commonly known. Inspiration empowers and enables mere men to partake of the Divine conversation.[[78]](#endnote-78)

The origin of this conversation is part Divine and part human: Moses was permitted to talk during the conversation.

The mode of divine inspiration is not a mystery. It is a conversation.

Secondary inspiration or Bath Kol or illumination is the spiritual gift that empowers and enables the seventy-two elders of Moses’ day to enter into the conversation between God and Moses without adding to it or taking from it. Secondary inspiration empowers and enables this prototypical Sanhedrin to understand the conversation; teach it to the people, thereby reducing Moses’ overtaxing burden; applying and judging correctly by it.

In this context, Moses remarks that all of God’s people should be prophets, which prediction was fulfilled on Pentecost, 33 AD. This secondary inspiration empowers and enables us to read our Bibles wisely and pray; it empowers and enables preachers and teachers to preach and teach; it empowers and enables us to make sensible applications and live Christ-like lives, however imperfectly we live them. Since this spiritual gift is now given to every Christian we should have no difficulty understanding what conversation with God should be shaped like.

Ecstatic utterance (one kind of heightened state of consciousness) has always been associated with secondary inspiration from the days of the first seventy-two until now. Ecstatic utterance is nothing more or less than the natural excitement that results from conversation with God, it is not insane uncontrollable babbling. God in His conversation with us, frequently blows us away with the greatness of His majesty. If He makes rocks cry out, and mountains sing, what sort of zombies would we be if we did not get excited about being part of God’s conversation: we might want to jump and shout, burst into singing or tears at some fresh insight. Feelings may grow so intense that we have to ask God to stop before we explode. He takes our very breath away, usually, yet not exclusively from the Bible. Even so, the real work of secondary inspiration is not ecstatic utterance; rather, it is that still small voice that teaches us patience, hard study, hard thinking, hard work, and endurance in the face of opposition and suffering. Secondary inspiration is all about tenacious rationality.

Tertiary inspiration has to do with ordinary human insight, which has no part in this conversation at all, and may not have any relationship whatsoever, with the work of the Spirit. It may be nothing more than the ordinary everyday work of God in providence: because He created us to work this way. Even atheists possess this kind of inspiration.

In all such discussions we must labor to distinguish between inspiration, inscripturation, illumination, interpretation, and canonization. Inspiration, or primary inspiration as we have called it, is the Spiritual gift that enables a prophet to enter into conversation with God: it has to do with hearing and speaking, not with writing.[[79]](#endnote-79) Inscripturation is the process of writing; there is no evidence that it is a Spiritual gift: there is a wide gulf fixed between conversation and recording of conversation, which opens up whole new doors for error. Illumination, which we have also called secondary inspiration, is the Spiritual gift that enables an ordinary person to enter into the prophets conversation with God and understand it; this empowers the sons of prophets, preachers, teachers, and others; this is the gift of Pentecost: it does not confer the ability to express new Scripture, nor does it guarantee that homilies, and the like, will ever be inerrant. Interpretation has to do with the output of illumination; there is no evidence that interpretation is an additional spiritual gift or that it is error free. Canonization is God’s official acceptance or recognition of inscribed documents in His throne room.

*Article VIII*

“We affirm that God in His Work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.

“We deny that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.”

*Our Refutation of Article 8*. We agree with Article 8, more or less. God did utilize people, His servants and still does. Some theologians make a distinction between inspiration, which refers to the speech of God and man’s ability to join in conversation with God; and Inscripturation, which refers to the Divine oversight of the writing process.[[80]](#endnote-80) We would prefer that this distinction be followed. This sentence confounds the idea of speaking with the idea of writing, which should never happen in a well constructed logical sentence. A prophet is fundamentally one who speaks. A scribe is fundamentally one who writes. We think of Moses as a writer; yet, Joshua was always in the tent with God and Moses. It is likely that the prophets were usually surrounded by scribes, except on rare occasions. Hence:

“We affirm that God in His Work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and speaking styles of the prophets whom He had chosen and prepared.

“We also affirm that God in this work of inscripturation utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.”

*Article IX*

“We affirm that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.

“We deny that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God’s Word.”

*Our Refutation of Article 9*. Having carefully maintained the distinction between what is spoken and what is written:

We agree that God’s utterance was true and trustworthy.

We do not agree that human hearing was inerrant. We believe that sinful humans in love with God did the very best they could possibly do to deliver true and trustworthy communications of all kinds. While recognizing that these humans were very imperfect, we give them the benefit of the doubt, without attempting to guarantee the outcome.[[81]](#endnote-81)

We agree that in all such communications from a broad category of subjects the authors strove to be true and trustworthy. Nevertheless, these authors could not possibly understand, or speak of all these subjects as we do today. As Article IX concedes, these men were not omniscient; neither were they ubiquitous.

Moreover, these authors were beset with the same human frailties that beset us. It takes a lifetime of hard study and intense prayer to begin to understand the Scripture with real balance and scope. The milk of Scripture is for children. The meat of Scripture is reserved for those who have put their backs into the toil, so that with sweat, tears, and even bloodshed they at last attained the prize.

Moses began his ministry at eighty and stumbled often. Inspiration did not come to prophets in an instantaneous blinding flash of light. No, Moses had to walk in the wilderness with Israel for another forty years, when at last he delivered his magnum opus, Deuteronomy, at one hundred twenty years of age. There was no evidence of his death.

Elijah endured the suffering of drought, watched his people in famine, endured the death of children of whom one was brought back to life, confronted Ahab, destroyed the false prophets of Baal, was defeated by and ran from Jezebel, was fed by angels, hid in a cave, listened to the raging wind, earthquake, and fire; until at last he heard the still small voice of God, anointed Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, foretold the death of Ahaziah, fought the armies of Israel, crossed the Jordan on dry land, left his prophetic heritage to Elisha, and was taken up to heaven without dying.

We doubt very much that many prophets found their message until their advanced old age.

Nor do we, looking back in history, always understand what these authors meant. Who can explain Ezekiel’s tetramorphs, or tell us why they seem to change from one vision to the next, or fathom why they look different in the New Testament. It is not likely that Ezekiel understood them either; yet he saw them and explained them as best he could.

Could these authors have unwittingly introduced error into the written record of God’s Holy Word? How would we ever know? We do not have the autographs. It is enough that we are sure that these all labored as we labor, striving with all their might to leave the best possible legacy, a true and trustworthy legacy. Even so, Moses struck the Rock that was Christ; as also, Elijah fled from Jezebel. Neither Moses nor Elijah was perfect; yet, they were True in spite of their errors. How is it that we expect inerrancy instead of Truth? Only a perfectionist would demand such a straightjacket definition.

*Article X*

“We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

“We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.”

*Our Refutation of Article 10*. We have dealt with this subject in a paper titled, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy The Role of Reason*. The basic problems are:

* It presents as a foundation for hope something other than God; it is especially out of balance with what the New Testament says about the Holy Spirit.
* It presents as dogma, that which cannot be proved from scripture.

In addition:

* It presents a discussion of inerrancy; yet begins with several other topics and does not arrive at a definition of inerrancy until Article 10. To avoid error, the first articles should have begun with basic statements about God: Father, Son, Spirit — One in essence and undivided.
* It presents a discussion which repeatedly falls into the error of assigning God’s attributes or energies to inanimate objects. Had it begun with God, such errors might have been avoided.
* It presents a discussion of inspiration here, rather than inerrancy, leaving an unclear view of both words. Inspiration, except for three known instances, refers to the spoken Word of God: so it is heretical to say, “Inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic[[82]](#endnote-82) text of Scripture.”

What should have been said is that, “Inspiration, strictly speaking, [except for three known instances], applies only to, the [spoken Word of God].” And, “[Inerrancy], strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture.” A theorem[[83]](#endnote-83) of inerrancy can only be accepted in this form. The distinction between what is spoken and what is written must be maintained.

*Article XI*

“We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.

“We deny that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.”

*Our Refutation of Article 11*. Infallibility is a whole new discussion. Briefly put, Scripture being an inanimate object can neither be fallible nor infallible. It is simply impossible to arbitrarily assign the attributes of living beings to inanimate objects. Only the fulfillment of what Scripture promises can be infallible. It is God who is infallible, and no other. Since the Bible cannot possibly be infallible, any related discussion of being errant or inerrant is irrelevant and moot.

We suppose that what Article 11 meant to say is, Whatever God promises to do in Scripture, He will most certainly and infallibly do; the Scriptures do not mislead us. The Holy Spirit protects us and leads us into all truth, so that as we toil at Bible study and prayer, He sanctifies us and brings us to glorification; even if we are saddled with the worst of all translations; or have, as yet, no translation in our native language at all.

Many saints have come to glory who have never owned a Bible, who could not even read or write; yet, what little they could hear or understand, persuaded them that Christ had risen, had conquered sin, death, and the devil, on the Cross, freely offering them forgiveness. Thus they took up their crosses and followed Jesus even unto death, simply because the Spirit gave them understanding of a few crumbs that fell from the Master’s table. The crumbs were not infallible. God is.

It should be clear that God working through sinful people, only by the Spirit, leads them through the wilderness of this life, so that finally they do not fail, even though they stumble often. That they do not fail is not a certainty: for Judas turned his back to God, as did the whole first generation in the wilderness: save Joshua and Caleb. This is the extent of infallibility.[[84]](#endnote-84)

*Article XII*

“We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from falsehood, fraud, or deceit.

“We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.”

*Our Refutation of Article 12*. See our a paper titled, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy The Role of Reason*.

Note how Article 12 also steals from the attributes of God and arbitrarily assigns these attributes to Scripture. This theft is too farfetched, too much of a leap to be excused as a metonymy.

God is not errant or fallible in any sphere of knowledge, human, angelic, or other. He is omniscient. There is nothing knowable that He does not know. There are many possibilities, far beyond human or even angelic knowledge that He also knows, even though these will never come to reality: if these could ever come to reality, God knows what the resultant outcome would be. God actually understands nuclear and astronomic physics, whereas we only struggle to grasp their surfaces.

On the other hand, God is as much the author of Science as He is the author of His Word. It is impossible that these two vast realms could ever be in disagreement, or even really separated. Wherever disagreement seems to arise between God’s Science and His Word, it is only because we do not have a deep enough knowledge or understanding of His Science, or of His Word, or of both.

Although, it is impossible that manmade scientific hypotheses, or our feeble understanding of history could overturn His Word, we do not possess a complete, final, and perfect understanding of either the Creation, or of the Flood, or of many other fields of human knowledge. We do not understand, or have sufficient evidence to grasp either the Creation or the Flood: not from God’s Science and not from God’s Word. The final evidences have yet to be revealed or disclosed and discovered.

*Article XIII*

“We affirm the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

“We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.”

*Our Refutation of Article 13*. See our paper, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy The Role of Reason*. We simply do not believe that inerrancy is a suitable substitute for the word, Truth. Nor do we think that complete truthfulness is much better. Neither of these expressions has propriety. It is enough to say that God cannot lie.

While Scripture must be evaluated according to its near context; its broader context by books; its context as a whole; its context in history including the cultural development of society and understanding common to mankind in each era; this does not mean that such a task is as simple as *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* claims it to be.

As a matter of fact, we cannot go back to the precise historic context and reconstruct it: too much information has been lost beyond all human hope of recovery. So, to some extent we are always aliens in the usage and purpose of Scripture; we are always strangers in paradise; we are always lost in “a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.”[[85]](#endnote-85) Only the Holy Spirit can guide us through this quagmire of contaminated evidence.

The laundry list[[86]](#endnote-86) is largely irrelevant. Most of these things, properly considered and evaluated only increase our understanding. There is no war between the God of technology, grammar, spelling, and the like; and the God of Scripture. We either use information or abuse information. Too much is being made of what we think we know, when what we do not know is greater, growing larger and faster than what we think we know.

*Article XIV*

“We affirm the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

“We deny that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.”

*Our Refutation of Article 14*. We agree. Well, maybe the word vitiate is too strong a word. There are problems that defy explanation; these certainly put a dent in our armor; maybe these don’t spoil our understanding, only because the Spirit protects us. Nevertheless, there are things in Scripture which no mere human understands. We dare not call what we do not understand error or discrepancy. The only thing discrepant or erroneous is human evidence and the human mind.

*Article XV*

“We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

“We deny that Jesus’ teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.”

*Our Refutation of Article 15*. Nuts! See the rest of our series of papers titled, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*.

Of course “the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration”: for no one can write inerrantly until that person has heard correctly, that which has been spoken without error. This, however, clouds the whole issue that perfect speech came first. Then a false teaching assumes that inspiration is about the empowerment to write, rather than the empowerment to hear and enter into the Divine conversation[[87]](#endnote-87) as Moses did in Exodus and John did in Revelation 1:1-2, 10; 4:1: for both Moses and John heard Jesus, the Word, before they began to write. The potential for an inerrant autograph can only follow after the assumption of perfect hearing and understanding. We have to believe that the Prophets and Apostles found this conversation alarming, amazing, curious, difficult to understand, overwhelming, perplexing, puzzling, startling, even terrifying: to be in the Presence of God and live is no small matter. That they could live through such an experience and still have a voice to speak is beyond human comprehension.[[88]](#endnote-88) To suspect that their hearing, understanding, speaking, and writing all remain perfectly intact after such cosmic events, stretches our credulity a bit: all of this is necessary for inerrancy to be correct, while never dropping a word.[[89]](#endnote-89)

Which specific teaching of Jesus is in view? Which appeals to accommodation are being discussed? These claims are simply too vague to discuss. Of course Jesus does not bend or distort the truth for individuals because of their influence, power, status, or wealth; yet He always accommodates orphans and widows, making truth accessible to the poor, downtrodden, needy, and prisoners.[[90]](#endnote-90)

Jesus is sinless man. He always has the fullness of the Spirit. It is impossible for Him to have natural human limitations: for He is exactly what God intended man to be, the completeness of the image of God, the absolute perfection of His likeness. He accomplished all of this with His Deity veiled, because He has no natural human limitations.

Rather, we should say that Jesus is perfectly natural: for it is we who are broken, sinful, sub-natural. Jesus, being sinless, is exactly what naturally created man was intended to be; He being filled with all the fullness of the Spirit is what Adam and Eve should have become. Jesus is natural man; it is we who are unnatural.

*Article XVI*

“We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church’s faith throughout its history.

“We deny that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by Scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.”

*Our Refutation of Article 16*. This is simply untrue. There are vast domains of Christianity that do not speak in these terms; as well as great ages of time where this is not discussed. Even where other statements of inerrancy are found, they are quite different in nature, and few would accept as palatable even 25% of these articles from *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*. Most of this topic is confined to the United States, to Fundamentalist Christians, and to a time subsequent to 1850.[[91]](#endnote-91)

If “inerrancy is [not] a doctrine invented by Scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism:” these claims need to be proved, yet no proof is given. The first claim is probably untrue, while the second claim is almost certainly true. While other discussions of inerrancy might be found here and there, none of them would espouse the detailed articles attached to the basic statement of inerrancy found in Article 10; almost all of these, as well as the aggregate statement, developed as a reactionary … response to higher criticism, neo-orthodoxy, modernism, liberalism, and the like. As the argument has developed since 1850 each new and revised statement contains sharper and more hostile statements, and many of these have increasingly strayed from what Scripture actually says about itself.

*Article XVII*

“We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God’s written Word.

“We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.”

*Our Refutation of Article 17*. We agree. See our series of papers titled, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*. The problem with Article 17 is that it does not come near to approaching the powerful involvement of the Spirit in every aspect of God’s written Word; nor does it scratch the surface of what God’s written Word has to say about Scripture.

The affirmation of truthfulness is not the same thing as an affirmation of inerrancy. Moreover, since the autographs are not in our possession. We are in no position to affirm or deny anything about the truthfulness of God’s written Word. As the sentence claims, the Holy Spirit alone communicates such confidence in the Word.

The latter sentence should have read, “We deny that the Scripture operates in isolation from or against this witness of the Holy Spirit.” The Spirit limits much of His work to the teaching of Scripture, as Christ promised. However, the Spirit of God, is God, and free from any constraints outside of the Trinity, He does as He pleases in the universe. For example, He assigns spiritual gifts to people, without consulting Scripture.

“Now the one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each individual in whatever way He[[92]](#endnote-92) pleases:” — 1 Corinthians 12:11

“The Spirit influences wherever He wishes, and you hear His voice, yet you do not know from where He comes, or to where He goes; so it is with those who are begotten of the Spirit.”[[93]](#endnote-93) — John 3:8

“The Spirit itself testifies with the spirit of each of us, that we are children of God.” — Romans 8:16

While it is true “that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the [truthfulness of] Scriptures, that work is certainly subordinate to His work in building The Church. Much of this work does appear to be isolated from Scripture.

Operation against Scripture is a different matter. It is impossible for God to deny Himself, to lie, or otherwise act in a self-contradictory manner.[[94]](#endnote-94)

If we were to do more than provide lip service to the Spirit’s involvement with the Word, we would need to start over again with a new Article 1. The new Article 1 would state relevant affirmations and denials about the Trinity. The new Article 2 would make relevant affirmations and denials about the Father. The new Article 3 would clarify relevant affirmations and denials about the Son. The new Article 4 would detail relevant affirmations and denials about the Spirit. Articles 5, and 6 would describe: The Church and her authority, and The Apostles and their authority: respectively. Then we might begin with a renumbered Article 10. Since this is a paper on inerrancy, topics, such as authority or infallibility, would not be addressed at all; or else the paper should be renamed to include them. Substitute words for inerrancy would be edited out: if inerrancy is intended, we would not allow words such as authority, inspiration, or norm to stray off the topical path.

The Holy Spirit is more than just an afterthought, tacked on near the end of the discussion. The Holy Spirit is, in fact, the driving power of the whole Trinity behind every discussion of Scripture. The Scripture cannot stand by itself without the Spirit. Therefore, the discussion of the Spirit belongs at the beginning in His rightful place within the Trinity.

*Article XVIII*

“We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

“We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.”

*Our Refutation of Article 18*. The Scripture is to be interpreted primarily by listening to the Spirit: these other things are instruments or tools that He is pleased to use or not use as He wishes. Many heresies have been expounded using all of these instruments or tools along with several others.

This is not the Age of Reason, wherein man prides himself in his ability to think without the help, guidance, and leadership of God. Raw exegesis, no matter how grammatical or historical, without the direct teaching ministry of the Spirit is a formula for disaster.

No small wonder then that many of the churches today find themselves in the Pharisee ditch on one side of the road; while many others of the churches today find themselves in the Sadducee ditch on the other side of the road; while those who struggle to maintain the middle of the narrow road are daily confronted and tempted by voices calling from the right ditch with lists of rules that must be obeyed, as voices calling from the left ditch spew out the poison of unbelief.

We equally reject and have refuted all forms of Wellhausen and other similar hypotheses. See:

<https://www.swrktec.org/old-testament-introduction>

*Article XIX*

“We affirm that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

“We deny that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences, both to the individual and to the Church.”

*Our Refutation of Article 19*.

We deny “that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith.”

We affirm “that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of [One God in Three Persons] is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith.”

We condemn this statement as taking the nature of God and assigning it arbitrarily to a book, however valuable that book may be, thus turning the book into an idol.

Such a confession cannot “lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ:” because it supplants the authority and hypostasis of Christ with another thing. It is impossible to assign exousia and hypostasis to an inanimate object.

Such a confession is not necessary at all: for it is clearly heretical. Such confessions and litmus tests of faith or orthodoxy have done much damage in The Church. Worthy people have been denied places of service because of such nonsense. Let us henceforth confine ourselves to what Scripture says about itself, without imposing our personal ideas on it or cutting off from it that which we do not like.

If this doctrine claiming “grave consequences” is taken at face value, it makes it virtually impossible to attempt bridge building with Catholics, Orthodox, and/or many other Christians. This doctrine, if believed and acted upon, isolates those who embrace it from all others: all other discussion is terminated because any other action bears “grave consequences”. This sort of unwarranted dogmatic harangue rests only on the signatories of *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*. If allowed to do so, this handful of men, would, if they could, dictate to the whole Christian Church on earth: this is the sum total of their authority. This is manmade dogma at its worst: it is neither scriptural nor conservative.

Since many Christians believe that the expression “grave consequences” is the first test of a fatal sin, this would imply that the Chicago doctrine is necessary for salvation: contrary to what it claims. Thus whatever the Chicago doctrine grants with the right hand, it removes with the left hand. This is talking out of both sides of the mouth at the same time. As far as any claim that this is an innocent mistake: these are the words of supposedly learned theologians, they should not make such errors of ignorance.

With all sincerity and sobriety we note that the content and form of Article 19 seem to mimic the content and form of early canonical documents. This is to say that once a canon was ratified by The Church, whether correctly or incorrectly, the final sentences consigned all who opposed such a canon to Hell. So Article 19 tends to do exactly what it says it does not do; namely, it threatens the salvation of sincere Christians with “grave consequences”, which many would take as code words for damnation. The expression “grave consequences” is a statement of anathema. *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* is also anathema to us.

*Summary*

Article 1 denies “that the Scriptures receive their authority from … any … human source.” While, not even Christ Himself has authority to change the autographs of the Old Testament, The Father and the Son alone have custodial authority over the Old Testament, and They appear to have ratified the Greek Text of the Old Testament; rather than the Hebrew Text.

Jesus, the perfect man has sole authority to interpret the Old Testament; He delegates that authority to His Apostles; hence the New Testament is written.

Therefore, Article 1 is heretical insofar as it denies that Jesus acts as perfect man, not simply as God, and further denies that Jesus delegates Apostolic authority to thirteen men with the express purpose of writing the New Testament, especially the Gospels; not to mention the Sanhedrin authority of seventy-two other men.

Thus, Article 1 is heretical because it denies that the Apostles have delegated custodial and interpretive authority over the Old Testament; and authorship, custodial, and interpretive authority over the New Testament. The Scriptures most certainly do “receive their [report of] authority from … human source.” The Scriptures have no authority of their own: they are an inanimate record. Authority is a property of living things.

“Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He explained to them in all the writings[[95]](#endnote-95) the things about Himself.” — Luke 24:27

“It happened, as He reclined[[96]](#endnote-96) at table with them, taking the bread, He blessed, breaking, and proceeded to give [it] to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. Finally, He became invisible from them. So they said to one another, ‘Was not our heart burning within us, as He talked with us in the road, and as He proceeded to explain the writings to us?”[[97]](#endnote-97) — Luke 24:30-32

“They proceeded to recount the [events] in the road, as well as how He was revealed to them in the breaking of the bread.”[[98]](#endnote-98) — Luke 24:35

“Then He said to them, ‘These [are] the words which I spoke to you, still being with you, that it is binding to have fulfilled everything having been written in the Law of Moses, Prophets, and Psalms about Me.’ While He opened their mind(s)[[99]](#endnote-99) to comprehensively understand the writings, He said to them, that thus it has been written, and thus it remains binding for Christ to suffer and to be raised out of death on the third day, to be declared upon His name: change of mind, and dismission of crimes for all the peoples, beginning from Jerusalem. Now, you are witnesses of these things.[[100]](#endnote-100) Look! I send[[101]](#endnote-101) the *Promise of My Father* upon you; yet, you be seated in the city of Jerusalem, until when you should be clothed with power out of highest heaven.”[[102]](#endnote-102) — Luke 24:44-49

“Refrain from [drinking or eating] idol sacrifices, blood, and strangled things, as well as from adultery: from which protecting yourselves you will [have] excellent practice. Be made well.”[[103]](#endnote-103) — Acts 15:23-29

Article 2 denies “that [The] Church … has authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.[[104]](#endnote-104) We have repeatedly observed how The Church receives the Scripture, maintains custodial care over the Scripture, learns the correct interpretation of Scripture, takes part in writing the instructions of Christ in the New Testament by supporting the apostolic witness, and publishes the Scripture. Now we will discover that she is being prepared by her Husband to take her seat at His side on His royal heavenly throne.

Therefore, Article 2 is heretical insofar as it denies that The Church shares regal authority, and has custodial, interpretive, authorship, and publication authority over the Bible. The Bible, being inanimate, has no authority whatsoever; nor is it equal in any way to Christ and His Church. In this light, the Spirit alone binds the conscience; the Church has delegated authority over Scripture. The Scripture does nothing more or less than maintain a written record of God’s exclusive sovereignty, as well as the acts of God, angels, and man under that Divine sovereignty: this legal precedent is extremely important; yet, we dare not assign to it arbitrary attributes beyond this. Church councils may have and do exercise authority over the Bible, since the Bible has no authority of its own; provided that no deviation is taken from the Bible’s historic legal precedent. That being said, Creeds, council canons, and declarations are all written documents, all lacking any authority, all are servants of Scripture as far as legal precedent is concerned. Written documents have no authority of their own: they are an inanimate record. Authority is a property of living things.

“Since a husband is head of the wife, as also the Christ [is] head of The Church; He is also the Savior of the body. Yet just as The Church is subordinate to Christ, in the same way also the wives to their own husbands in all [matters]. The husbands should love[[105]](#endnote-105) their own wives, just as also the Christ loved The Church, and delivered Himself for her; so that He would have sanctified her, by cleansing in a bath of water with a promise[[106]](#endnote-106); so that He could have placed her beside[[107]](#endnote-107) Himself, The glorious Church, not possibly having a spill, or wrinkle, or any [other] such [flaws]; rather that she would be saintly and pure. In the same way the husbands are indebted to love their own wives as their own bodies. The one loving his own wife, loves[[108]](#endnote-108) himself: for no one ever abhorred his own flesh; rather he feeds and he warms her, just as also the Lord, The Church: since we are parts of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. In response to this a man will leave his father and mother behind and be attached to his wife, so the two will be about one flesh. This mystery is great; yet I speak about Christ and about The Church.”[[109]](#endnote-109) — Ephesians 5:23-32

Article 3 takes the properties of the revelation of the spoken Word of God and gives these properties to written words. On the other hand, we agree with, “We deny that the Bible … depends on the responses of men for its validity.”

Articles 4 and 5 are not refuted.

Article 6 draws dangerously close to the heresy of dictation. It also uses promises of fulfillment as bases for a doctrine in inspiration. It contradicts itself in assuming the right to canonize Scripture.

Article 7 applies inspiration to the act of writing, rather than to the act of hearing. It presses on 2 Timothy 3:16-17 to say more than it actually says.

“All God-breathed[[110]](#endnote-110) Scripture, [is] profitable also: for teaching, for refutation, for correction, for child training in righteousness: so that the complete man of God being completed for all good works.”[[111]](#endnote-111) — 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Article 8 is not refuted.

Article 9 is challenged for failing to deal fairly and completely honestly with the reality of human interaction with Scripture.

Article 10 was refuted in a paper titled, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy The Role of Reason*.

Article 11 is refuted in that it arbitrarily assigns the infallibility of God to Scripture.

Article 12 was also refuted in, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy The Role of Reason*, as well as elsewhere in this paper. This article and some others discusses issues that should be treated under the Doctrine of God proper, and not under Bibliology. This leads to excesses and errors. It is impossible that there ever be a contradiction between God’s Science and God’s Word. There can only be a contradiction caused by the limits of human evidence, knowledge, and understanding.

Article 13 is the whole point of our series of papers titled, *A Refutation of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*.[[112]](#endnote-112) We deny “the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.”

In terms of today’s common knowledge, inerrancy calls to mind a perfect graded paper without any red marks: either the teacher didn’t read it, or obvious errors were missed, or every word actually was spelled correctly, etc. This is clearly not what inerrancy means, so why persist in using this misleading term.

We do not refute the idea of inerrancy. We do protest that it is misleading; it is out of balance with what Scripture says about itself, especially in contrast with what Scripture says about the Spirit; and it is easily and commonly abused. We believe that it is better to find and use words that do not stir up such a fuss.

Article 14 is not refuted.

Article 15 fails to show how “the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.” This article is refuted by its own vagueness and lack of evidentiary support.

Article 16 is simply a display of ignorance of history without evidence. Had evidence been provided, we might be inclined to listen to reasonable persuasion. As it is, this statement is contradictory to all our studies of church history: so it would be of crucial interest, if it could be proved in whole or in part. This article is refuted because seemingly ludicrous claims are made without any means of support.

Article 17 is not refuted. It is simply insufficient to give justice to the work of the Spirit in the New Testament. The denial statement errs in its logical order. The Spirit may do as He wishes; the Scripture cannot operate in isolation from Him: this is not a warrant for anything-goes theology.

Article 18 assumes too much about man’s ability to correctly interpret Scripture. Such arrogant assumptions have resulted in one contradiction after another, and one heresy after another down through the ages. Scripture must be approached through the Spirit, with great fear and trembling, in the full realization of the fact of how easily man blunders. Then and only then, as The whole Church comes to unanimous agreement can the studies and suggestions of the great scholars be thought of as the teaching of The Church. The fact that controversy remains is a strong indication that God’s interpretation has not yet been found.

Article 19 is especially obnoxious in that it anticipates turning the misleading teaching about inerrancy, cluttered with mostly irrelevant claims about authority, into a rubric to guide and judge The Church. Many lives have been damaged by this sort of folly and idolatry.

*Conclusions*

If main articles can be refuted as heretical, at what point is the whole of *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* judged to be without merit: a frivolous waste of time? Not only does the whole denial of delegated authority in The Church and delegated authority among the Apostles tend toward heresy; the creation of a canon for orthodoxy in Article 19 is odiously discordant and divisive in The Church.

Our refutation of *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, has nothing to do with the topic of inerrancy itself. It has everything to do with grossly excessive, even heretical statements about the authority of The Church, and the authority of Christians, especially the Apostles; then having the temerity to claim an authority of orthodoxy in Article 19 that self-contradicts most of the thesis of the whole document.[[113]](#endnote-113) We have shown that both Apostles and The Church have and exercise authority over Scripture.

At yet, still another extreme, doctrines of inerrancy are so misleading that they include things like, King James Only Inerrancy, and Textus Receptus Only Inerrancy, which will be discussed in the next paper.

*Epilogue*

*The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* seems to find its philosophical foundation in the idea of the Rule of Law, which we believe is particularly American in its origins. In contrast, we believe that it is fair to say that most other nations, at least in western civilization found their bases in the idea of the Rule of a King or Queen. This is certainly true of ancient civilizations such as Sumer (3600) Egypt, Babylon, Akkad, Ur, Elam, Hittite, Phoenicia, Syria, Assyria, Lydia, Cush, Chaldea, Persia, Greece, and Rome; as well as the succeeding nations of Europe. So it would seem that the idea of the Rule of Law is a novelty in the history of the human race.

If we delve further into these developments we see the Code of Hammurabi (1750) and the Law of Moses (1406). To class these as the Rule of Law would be a grave misunderstanding of the situation. Rather they are Covenants![[114]](#endnote-114) While there are several kinds of ancient covenants, the one that most interests us is the Suzerainty Covenant.

In the Suzerainty Covenant a people or tribe under real or supposed oppression is rescued by a king. Then the king stipulates all the conditions under which the rescued people may be permitted to continue to live under the king’s protection. The only choice or voice that the people have in the matter is agreeing to live by all of king’s conditions: take it, or leave it. Of course, the decision, to leave it, would either place the people at the mercy of their former oppressors, or being left hopelessly on their own devices, or face destruction by the king, who may now see them as enemies, rather than allies. So, the rescued people frequently agree to live under the king in a state of vassalage.

This differs completely from the modern Rule of Law, whereby an independent people, with no accountability to anyone greater than themselves, ostensibly write and enforce their own laws.

It is exactly such a Suzerainty Covenant or Treaty that we face in Exodus 20. Yahweh has rescued His people from their Egyptian oppressors and slave masters at Pesach, 1406. Now, a few days later, on Shavuot, 1406, they stand at Sinai to receive a Law in which they have no say: they can return to Egypt, perish alone in the desert, or walk with Yahweh. It is precisely Shavuot, which constitutes Israel as a new nation under Yahweh, unlike any other nation on earth; not Pesach.[[115]](#endnote-115) However, when we compare Exodus 20 to the Code of Hammurabi, we find, instead of rules and regulations, ten things that prohibit slavery.

The crucial question here is, what is Yahweh’s relationship to Covenant, since He is it’s sole author? Both tablets, which are likely identical twins, are placed under His throne, the Mercy Seat, inside the Ark of the Covenant. This is unusual: for ordinarily one tablet would be given to the king, specifying his obligations; while the other tablet would become a public monument specifying the obligations of the people. Yet, in this case, Yahweh takes all obligations for both Himself and His people to Himself. Thus He promises to keep His people’s obligations for them by grace as long as they continue to walk with Him.

This provision for the people’s obligations is what the sacrificial system teaches.[[116]](#endnote-116) If we look more closely at the tablets, we see that Yahweh has provided for a Crown Prince, the perfect Son, who will honor both Father and mother, both King and kingdom. Thus the Covenant will be kept intact as long as the Son lives. All highways point to Christ.

Is Yahweh above or under such a Covenant? He is its sole author, so He must be above it. He binds Himself to its stipulations, so He must be under it. The solution to this riddle rests in the fact that Yahweh is only under this Covenant to the extent that it is the perfect expression of His character and will. Yahweh is not under the Law, He agrees to care for and serve His people by maintaining their freedom. Yet the Son comes under the Law, to fulfill all the righteousness of the Law.

“Now when the fullness of the time came, God sent out His Son, being created of woman, being created under Law; so that He would purchase[[117]](#endnote-117) those who were under Law; so that we would take away a child-relationship. So, because you are [His] children, God sent out the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, exclaiming, and shouting, ‘Abba, Father!’ So that you are no longer a slave, but a child [of God]; yet, if a child, then also an heir of God through Christ.” — Galatians 4:4-7

When Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit makes the Father’s children and people, His Body and His Bride, He elevates them above the Law to the realm of Deification, Sanctification, and ultimately Glorification. God’s work, one-day-at-a-time, makes them Christ-like. Hence, they are no longer under the Law; they are above the Law, building upon the Law, under grace, with the Law of the Covenant cut into their hearts, by the Spirit.

*The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, especially in Articles 1 and 2, attempts to shove The Church back under the heel of the Law.[[118]](#endnote-118) So while *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* sounds very conservative; it is in reality a return to the slavery of Pharisaism.

*Caveats*

To be fair, there are statements of inerrancy that are far more palatable than, *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*. To get started on a broader investigation of the subject see:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_inerrancy>

Also to be fair, we have also maintained that the authority of both Apostles and The Church rest largely upon unanimous decision. It should be clear that the widespread fracturing of The Church on earth today, seriously hampers the ability of The Church to speak with authority on any subject. The Church on earth today is out of step with The Church in heaven on hundreds of issues. Until The Church on earth takes its own need for repentance seriously, it cannot and will not speak with authority. This situation is so intolerable that we now find letters from broken hearted prelates, whose churches will not permit them to commune with each other.

*End Note*

In our next and final paper we deny, as intellectually dishonest, that any reconstruction or recovery of the autographs, if possible at all, is achievable by simply examining the surviving manuscripts. This paper outlines a few of the difficulties in getting from inerrant autographic text of Scripture, to available manuscripts with great accuracy, to copies and translations of Scripture, which faithfully represent the original, without losing any essential element of the Christian faith along the way. Article 10 uses the phrase, “in the providence of God”: at least for some theologians this means Textus Receptus, or even King James Only. The providence of God does not certify for us, lives free from pain and suffering; nor does it certify freedom from error. Error, like rain, falls on the just and the unjust alike.

[[119]](#endnote-119)

1. This is, as we shall subsequently show, simply what the Bible has to say on the subject. If we are to maintain the neutral point of view (NPOV); we must, at least, be accurate in our use of the biblical evidence we have. Anything less fails to be either biblical or conservative. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Jesus Christ, He is the light and the salt. The Church is the light and salt only as it is in relationship to Him through the power of the Spirit. He cannot lose His savor or His light; yet the churches can turn away from Him and lose both. This is exactly how a worthless church develops. However, churches are able to repent at any time, and many have done so throughout history. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. We emphasize again that it is the fulfillment, not the “inerrancy” which is specified by Scripture. Moreover, Jesus is talking about the Torah; not even about the prophets or writings, which apply the Torah, and bask in its glory; and certainly not about the New Testament at all, except as it will record in the future, the fulfillment of Torah. Those theological constructs which camp on the divergence between Law and Gospel, or Law and Grace have made a serious misstep here, being directly confronted and contradicted by this passage. Such constructs are either wrong or seriously exaggerated. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Inerrancy is not my concern: that is God’s concern. My problem is faithful teaching and obedience; these are tasks far beyond my mere human abilities: such tasks are only accomplished through the overflowing generosity of God. It is simply amazing that so many who wish to run to Matthew 5:13-19 as a proof-text for their particular brand of one or another inerrancy doctrine (and there are many variations of these); it is simply amazing that these many so readily turn away from and despise Moses and the law at every turn. The shame of contemporary reality is that the Old Testament is rarely read or studied in churches today; homily or sermon texts are simply not taken from the Old Testament; the Old Testament is even lampooned as irrelevant. This is a proof-text for fulfilment of and obedience to the law; any supposed claim for inerrancy is purely coincidental, it must be found elsewhere. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. The only known exceptions are when God wrote on tablets in the Decalogue, when the disconnected hand wrote on the wall in Daniel, and when Jesus wrote in the dirt in the incident concerning the Adulterous Woman. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. When God speaks, more takes place than mere communication; whole worlds spring into existence from the breath of His mouth; He sings and the entire stellar universe is created; He sighs and humanity is brought to life from clay; He utters His displeasure and mountains quake, floods overwhelm the dry land, mankind is plunged into despair; He whispers and all creation is restored to peace and rest.

   When God speaks, people are changed. Natural revelation and special revelation are not really divisible: for God’s spoken Word enables and teaches humanity what to write. Yet, make no mistake, the fact that humanity writes is an entirely different, utterly other kind of thing. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Ἐξουσία (authority) is a compound of ἐκ or ἐξ + οὐσία. The prefix ἐκ or ἐξ indicates the source of something: out of or from. Οὐσία has to do with the way a thing exists; it stems from the basic copula (equative verb, to be): we use the word more technically to indicate the essence or inner nature of a thing, especially the οὐσία, or nature of God, which refers only to the Trinity as a whole. When we speak of the persons, we use the term, ὑποστάσις.

   So ἐξουσία generally refers to anything that stems from a person or thing’s essence or nature, which might, yet does not include any attribute. For example, power might stem from our essential human nature, but not necessarily so. We have enough authority and power to flip on a light switch; yet, in all reality the power stems from electricity and all its properties. On the other hand, electricity has no authority whatsoever; it only has power: so we are unlikely to discuss the ἐξουσία of electricity, because electricity has no ἐξουσία.

   Thus ἐξουσία or authority stems from the very nature of God Himself; it’s hidden deeply within the mystery of God’s unknowable essence or nature. It may be called God’s energy: thus distinguishing between οὐσία or essence and ἐξουσία, part of God’s energy. Yet, ἐξουσία is not all of God’s essence or nature; it merely stems from God’s essence or nature. God, by nature and essence, has the moral right to do and say anything He wants to do and say: except that, once God has acted, He is unable to contradict Himself. So ἐξουσία is the moral right to act: it is permissible, possible; and within the constraints of Divine law, legality, or legitimacy.

   Human beings, angels, and other creatures possess no such ἐξουσία. All of them possess only delegated authority; which is by definition, not belonging to their essence or nature. On the other hand, inanimate objects, like books, have no authority whatsoever: for fundamentally ἐξουσία is the moral right to act; inanimate objects, by definition cannot act.

   Since God binds Himself to what He has already said, because He cannot contradict His own οὐσία: human beings are also bound to what God says. If man records that living Word, it shows that man is also obliged to obey that living Word: not because of the ἐξουσία of the record, which has no ἐξουσία; only because of the ἐξουσία of God. Records are not culpable, responsible agents, nor can they become such, they have no ability to become such, they cannot act. Only in the hands of a living being, can ἐξουσία become actionable, culpable, responsible.

   By attempting to arbitrarily assigning ἐξουσία to the Bible, the Chicago statement comes precipitously close to creating an idol, a demonic pseudo-existance; a human attempt to make that which is inanimate, animate. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. The Church, with both words capitalized, in our manner of thinking, is always a reference to Hebrews 12: 22-29, never to any political group here on earth. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. By this wondrous logic, I do not have authority to drive a car; my driver’s license possesses that authority. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Revelation 10 [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. We were tempted to ad the adjective, sole, to the phrase; but, of course, scribes were often part of the process: for example, Mark writing for Peter, and Luke writing for Paul. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. We could multiply examples, yet this one verse clearly shows that these Apostles were chosen by Jesus, and given orders through the Spirit, which both Jesus and the Spirit expected to be obeyed, with dire consequences for those who flaunted them. How is it not clear that these thirteen (the twelve plus Paul) are chosen to replace the tribal leadership for the new spiritual Israel? How is it not clear that these thirteen are supposed to communicate these commandments to all of The Church on earth, which they quickly do through delegated authority? This delegated authority is not the New Testament: for the New Testament is not close to being written. Neither is this delegated authority the Old Testament: for the Old Testament requires the Spirit’s tutelage for correct application, interpretation, and understanding. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. The Church in the first century did not treat this authority lightly; rather they hastened to obey the Apostolic teaching. We see here a brief rudimentary outline of the form and content of early Christian worship services: the teaching is followed by fellowship (the forgiveness of any and every grievance), and by communion, all of which are mingled with many prayers. All thought it scandalous to be absent. Ananias and Sapphira both died for trifling with this authority. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. We see that the Apostles are never separated from the Word of God (Christ, Who speaks), yet the Apostles have the authority to bring confirmation by the Spirit, of the Spirit’s work. This confirmation does not come from the Old Testament Scripture. What the Samaritans had, and still have is a corrupted version (certainly not inerrant) of Torah, called the Samaritan Pentateuch. The Samaritans had first met Jesus through the Woman at the Well, that movement has grown, and now needs to be confirmed. Samaria, which has been separated from Israel for centuries is now rejoined to The Church. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. The Apostolic authority and power are real enough, yet Simon’s means of acquisition are seriously flawed. And why not? Every other power and authority in the political world is up for sale. Still, Simon did not dispute this authority; no, he coveted it. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. There is even legal precedent for this: for in the days of the gentle and good king Hezekiah the Israelites are invited to the great Pesach and received without condition of perfect purification (2 Chronicles 30:1, 5, 18, 20, 28). King Josiah evidently continued this practice (2 Chronicles 35:17-18). [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Who is this, you, which Peter seeks to convince? Not the Apostles. Not the Presbyters (Sanhedrin). Not most of the crowd. The two adversarial complainants are the Apostles and the Judaizers. The dispute is not over obedience to Torah; rather over how Torah is obeyed. The solution is not to brand the Judaizers as heretics, casting them out of The Church; rather by convincing persuasion based on evidence to get them to make the voice of The Church unanimous. This is the authority of The Church; it is not complete until all The Church has spoken. Peter is blunt in his argument, he addresses the Judaizers directly, yet not dictatorially: else the court case would now be over and dismissed, Peter only speaks as the first witness. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Here is the secret. None of us bears the yoke of Torah, because Christ has carried it for us. In Christ we possess obedience to Torah. Now we live with Torah as our foundation, obeying through persuasion or faith. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. The context shows that the salvation discussed here, is salvation from performing the strict fleshly requirements of Torah, especially all of the animal sacrifices, which will soon become impossible to perform; which even from the days of David were fading in glory: because they were only types of the heavenly reality; which is Christ, Himself. This ultimately leads to eternal salvation; yet, eternal salvation is not the topic of discussion. The basic question being asked is, Why should we debate imposing a burden, from which we have just been relieved? Peter does not doubt for an instant that he has authority to ask such a question. None of the assembly hesitate in believing that they have authority to discuss this issue. Whatever they decide, they will suppose to be the voice of the Spirit. None of the issues presented here are clarified anywhere in the Old Testament, not even that Christ would come and fulfill all the righteous demands of Torah. These issues are only made clear in the New Testament, which has yet to be written by the Apostles, within the authority of The Church. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. This whole process, commonly called The Jerusalem Council is clearly a legal proceeding held under the rules laid down in Torah. Two witnesses are required by Torah; so this transition paragraph emphasizes the fact that the two witnesses, Peter and James have spoken in exact agreement. Moreover, both Peter and James are eyewitnesses of Jesus’ (specifically called God) work among both Samaritans and Gentiles. So Jesus’ testimony is also brought into play because of widespread evidence of events. The testimony of the Old Testament is also added clinching the nail on the conclusion (Amos 9:11-12). [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. The tent of David, after seven years of struggle, reunified Israel and Judah, which opened a considerable door of evangelization under Solomon. What Jesus began with the Samaritan Woman (John 4:7-26) and the Greek Canaanite or Syro-Phoenician Woman (Matthew 15:22; Mark 7:24-30), now begins to yield fruit before the Apostles’ witness. The logic is irrefutable. The authority is unquestionable. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. There is no doubt in James’ mind that he has full authority to pronounce the will of the Spirit in the consent of all The Church. There is no further discussion after this. The evidence is irrefutable. All The Church has come to a unanimous conclusion. The Spirit has spoken through men. None of this depends on an inerrant Scripture; it only depends on a true Scripture: the witness of Amos is only part of the evidence, and it is not applied exactly: for example, nothing is said of Edom. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Elders or πρεσβυτέροις, bishops, members of the Sanhedrin (not priests), the third level of authority after Jesus and the Apostles. Although the High Priest might convene the Sanhedrin, all Levites were exempted from Sanhedrin service by birthright. This is the continuation of the seventy-two that Jesus also called and sent. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ seals the unanimous vote. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. The Apostles certainly had the authority to send a delegation to Antioch; and later, to authorize missionary journeys. We note with interest that they are already ruling The Church through elders, and that nothing takes place without the approval of all The Church. The Church functions on unanimity, not on consensus, not by dictatorial authority; to know the mind of the Spirit there must be unquestioned unanimity. The Apostles’ authority stems from the universal behavior of The Church. One Body cannot move in two directions at the same time. Later, when dissension and division arise a severe blow is dealt to The Body. Yet, this did not break communion, it only decided directions and team assignments for missionary parties. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. present infinitive [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. This surely seems to be an official authority letter to us. They wrote officially in an official style. They showed the cause. They made the legal issues clear. They sent an official delegation to reinforce the authority and clarity, answering any questions that might arise. The delegation had two witnesses over and above the usual missionary team, which indicates the legal nature of the issue. The letter reaches out to embrace the Gentiles as genuine members of The Church. There is no reason for rejection on the part of the Gentiles, so the unity of The Church is preserved intact. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. The Apostles, with their assisting elders retained jurisdiction over the decrees on behalf of The Church. The Apostolic authority is to recognize and announce that unanimity has been reached. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. It is no use claiming the Divinity of Christ in this situation: for except for brief flashes of His glory, Christ’s Divinity was veiled from 4 BC-33 AD (Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:29; Philippians 2:7). This work, in which the Father spoke to us by [His] Son, in which Christ Himself appears as that Word more perfect than Scripture, Jesus, the Word, the words giver; this work is accomplished by perfect-man filled with the Spirit. This is the man that Adam failed to become. This is the Word engraved in human flesh, not the Scripture recorded in a book. This is what Jesus authorizes us to become; what the Spirit empowers us to become; what we certainly will become. This is the human source which provides all of the authority explained and expressed; yet not possessed by Scripture. Only living beings are able to receive and possess such authority. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Ethos is the standard of society or the tribe, more caught than taught. Logos is the formal teaching of a school. Pathos is the school of hard knocks, experience, suffering. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Jesus is far more than the supreme eternal teacher (logos) of Torah. Jesus is the complete embodiment and perfect fulfillment of Torah in all its righteous demands. Hence, to have Christ in us, to be in Christ is to have the Living Torah planted and growing within us. The idea of obedience to Torah in the incompetent flesh is reduced to absurdity. Torah is alive within us, and we stand upon Torah as our foundation. This is part of what it means for Jesus to be The Word: for, from all eternity past, unto the ages of ages, Jesus is Torah, The Word. That which is an eternal life force, that which is LOGOS, cannot be reduced to mere lessons and examples, logos. If you believe that Jesus is nothing more than a great example or teacher, you do not yet understand who Jesus truly is. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. The Old Testament is thought by many to be canonized by the Jews at the Council of Jamnia around 90 AD. However, this cannot be proved; we cannot even prove that any Council of Jamnia took place: the idea was hypothetical from the start.

    This is of no consequence: for by this time Jesus has already stripped the Jews of all spiritual authority, and delegated that authority to The Church. It is The Church, which is the true Israel of God.

    Note that the whole Jamnia hypothesis presupposes that the authority to canonize rests with people; the Bible is not self canonizing. We reject this whole line of reasoning, even though it is followed by many Christian theologians; we claim that only God Himself has the authority to canonize: in the canonization process men are only servants (the Levites who will lay up the book(s) in the Oracle) and witnesses (the priests and people standing by). The real act of canonization consists of the fact that the Shəkinah receives the book(s) without destroying anyone for blasphemy: thus indicating His approval. Such approval is subject to the annual sprinkling of the blood of atonement, which authorizes the priests and Levites to go about their daily duties within the Oracle.

    Canonization requires laying up in the Oracle (God’s throne-room) of the Temple, followed by God’s reception; Herod’s Temple is destroyed in 70 AD; so that the only remaining authoritative Oracle and Temple is in heaven, where all Scripture must be canonized, or else there is no canonical Scripture. We deny that canonization is or ever was an act of man.

    The supposed recognition of the canonical New Testament must be the result of awareness within The Church of the realities of Revelation 5. The Church itself is a living temple (Matthew 26:61; Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19-21; Acts 7:48; 17:24; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:11; Revelation 3:12; 7:15; 11:1-2, 19; 14:15, 17; 15:5-8; 16:1, 17; 21:22). The canonical act of laying up could be completed by God’s reception into the human heart: yet, now we are over our heads in the iconography, mystery, symbology, and typology of The Church. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Acts 15 [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Although this verse is hotly disputed, there can be little doubt that this verse delegates authority, or that such authority stems from the fact that, “[Jesus] is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16).” The dispute is over whom or what the recipient of this delegated authority is. Here are some interesting quotes:

    “The New Testament shows that Christ deliberately created his Church to be the vehicle of his continuing mission in the world. He promised to remain present in his Church for all time, and he lovingly guides it through the presence of the Holy Spirit.”

    — <http://www.beginningcatholic.com/church-authority>

    “The source and guarantee of this Church authority is Christ’s continuing presence in his Church — ‘Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age’ (Mt 28:20).” — ibid

    Suffice it to say that the recipient of this authority is clearly The Church. We will not attempt to prove how such authority is held by The Church. The Church is, by definition, one single body, so that this authority is a shared authority, distributed among all baptized believers. Nothing is said about any authority of Scripture, so we can only conclude that Scripture is nothing more or less than a record of The Church’s authority; a vital record, to be sure; a record that must not be broken, because breaking such a record would amount to defying the authority of The Church, hence despising the authority of Jesus, and of His Father. Such a breach of authority can only anticipate some sort of disciplinary action from the Spirit. Yet, neither authority nor power are seen to proceed from the book itself. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. This is the subjunctive mood; it is not a discussion of the operation of the will. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. This assumes that all the churches speak with one voice, which today is clearly no longer the case. This also suggests that such authority is limited to issues, which all of The Church on earth have previously considered. Hence, excommunication under today’s conditions is a very dangerous act: for we could easily expel the innocent. Clear cut situations are not overly common: brothers and sisters deserve the benefit of the doubt in church courts. Augustine claims that he never excommunicated a single person during his tenure in the bishop’s office; in fact he pleads vigorously that another bishop would readmit someone to the table.

    Nevertheless, there is a clear path of authority here, and that authority rests with the legal court system of The Church. This is not a prescription for individual action; neither have secular employers or secular governments any basis for applying this to employee or citizen disagreements: for they have no means of submitting their decision to The Church.

    Moreover, this authority is established on the basis of legal precedent, so that it cannot strike out on any new path, no matter how seemingly desirable, the legal precedent of authority must be cohesive, it must have the necessary synergy to hang together. So, what little we know of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, still provides the foundation of their authority, which derives directly from God. It is utter nonsense to rest this authority of legal precedent on an inerrant manuscript which we do not possess: for if an error is discovered, we shall immediately begin to scramble for fresh understanding of our own errors. That being said, the authority of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which they received directly from God, still stands unimpeded. We simply failed to record or copy it correctly, or understand it properly. The next archaeological discovery may force us to rethink the entire situation. Nevertheless, the authority of God in Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their contemporaries found recorded in Genesis is the legal precedent for the authority of Moses. So, Moses is not free to invent some new monotheism as Akhenaten (aka Amenhotep IV, Amenophis IV, Naphu(`)rureya, Ikhnaton, etc.) certainly did, breaking precedent with the whole Egyptian culture. Moses is bound to the authority of Yahweh both in his legal precedent and in his personal conversation. Future prophets as well are tested in their authority, against their consistency with the authority of Moses, as well as their accuracy concerning facts. Jesus comes with authority to show that neither the Pharisees nor the Sadducees are consistent with the authority of Moses; He ultimately rejects both, not because their documents are incorrect; yet rather because, their authority structure is twisted, it is not consistent with the authority of legal precedent. Thus, Jesus fulfills Torah, on the basis of its correct interpretation and understanding.

    The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) applied evidence and legal precedent in an indisputable way. Once this decision is ratified by all of The Church, it becomes a new precedent; new or future members are no longer free to dispute or disregard it. Similarly, this discussion here in Matthew 18:17 is not an invitation to local churches to strike out on new ground, but to apply the legal precedents of The Church, which is the foundational authority of God, spoken from the mouths of Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone.

    It is not what men wrote about Jesus that becomes the chief cornerstone, rather Jesus Himself is the chief cornerstone. If what men wrote were the only surviving access to Jesus, then Scripture would be more important: this is not the case. Jesus still lives. The Spirit has now come in full power, so that we have direct access to the Father and the Son, by the Spirit. We do have a somewhat abused record of the Scripture; yet, more importantly, we also have the Spirit to enable us to understand the Scripture correctly, and to move on into the future, going where none of our forefathers ever dreamed of going. Those that would abuse the Spirit’s power to deny precedent authority, striking out in new directions, are clearly wrong. Those claiming spiritual authority for tampering with the sanctity of life and marriage are wrong, because of this principle; yet they are no more wrong that those who invent new rules about Scripture that are not found in Scripture, or are even contradicted by Scripture.

    An interesting sidelight is that Matthew, the former tax collector, still thinks that the act of collecting taxes is extremely sinful. There may even be some double entendre or innuendo of Apostolic humor hidden here. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. The temple leaders are condemned by Peter and John for claiming greater authority than God Himself: the temple leaders judged (past tense), and they judged wrongly. Their action against the Apostles was based on prejudice, not on reason, or fidelity to God, not even on fidelity to Torah. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Although this is not specifically about the authority of The Church, it shows that well known Church leaders were quite willing to defy the clearly stated judgment of temple leaders. While Peter and John are supported by the commandment concerning false witness, they have very little else in Old Testament support. Yet they are not being ordered to falsify their witness; they are only ordered to be silent; unless this could be taken as a sin of omission, which is a bit of a stretch. Their fundamental authority is that they saw and heard Jesus, and that authority trumps everything else, including obedience to temple leaders. Peter and John do not really take their position on written Scripture. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. The closest antecedent is the converted disciples, not the missionary evangelists. New presbyters were elected to join the seventy-two, by each church, from among their own number. Each group of newly converted disciples constitutes a new tribe within spiritual Israel; the full complement of presbyters would number six per tribe if the pattern of Exodus were followed. These are lay leaders, not priests. The grammar does not permit any suggestion that Apostles appointed the presbyters, although they may have given their approval of the election. Historically, such offices were not sought in the early years; so that candidates were sometimes drafted against their will; some had no theological experience or training. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, as evinced by the ability to elect presbyters, each church is capable and worthy of self governance. This governance has full power and authority to continue in Jesus Christ, by following the legal precedent He set before them. No authority is extended to any book. All authority stems from Jesus to the churches, and the churches have governance authority over their presbyters, not the other way around. These presbyters, if the Exodus purpose is maintained, would have been chosen because they were thought to be most gifted among the number to study and explain the legal precedent, and form judgments from it. However, such judgments could never overstep the authority of the local church or The Church at large, to grant or withhold agreement. This was not a dictatorship. It does not appear to be a republic either; it is certainly not a democracy. It appears to be a growing family in which each new generation is dependent upon the living precedents established by God within the family; if parts of the family make tentative local decisions, such decisions are always subject to the blessing of the whole. The only way to know that the Spirit is in agreement, is when the whole family is in unanimous agreement. This necessitates that ties be maintained with Jerusalem as long as Jerusalem remains the primary residence of the Apostles. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. This persuasion into obedience to the Father, Son, and Spirit is key to whatever authority exists. Authority is delegated from the Father to the Son, and made real to The Church on earth at large, by the power of the Spirit. This is why the presbyters function within the authority of the local churches. Even the Apostles themselves are not imbued with extraordinary authority; their special nature is that they are eyewitnesses of the life of Christ: hence, their witness is special, and establishes special legal precedent from the life of Christ, yet their authority does not appear to be extraordinary in other respects. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. This is the same information exchange that would be expected within any other living body. The relationship is mutually respectful without being dictatorial. The body functions because Jesus (God) and the Spirit (God) coordinate the life of the body in accordance with the Father’s (God’s) wishes. All things work together for good…. Note that God is working directly with them, without any indication of guidance from Scripture. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Paul’s immediate concern is to fulfill the roll of the watchman (Ezekiel 33:6). This probably explains some of the numerous trumpets in the worship service of Revelation. The City of God has been attacked by evil forces, so he wishes to be innocent of failing to remind every resident, Jew or Gentile, that they are free in Christ, and have already overcome the wicked one. Paul has no desire to dictate to anyone. His whole concern is that all find freedom in Christ; that none be ensnared again by the works of the devil, hence they need to be guarded and shepherded. Again all authority stems from Jesus through His Church, which chooses from among its own membership, officers who are best capable for watching and shepherding. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. ἐπισκόπους, bishops, guards, watchmen. Paul is addressing a meeting of the Ephesian presbyters, and expands upon the duties of their office as presbyters. He does not introduce a new office in this verse. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. The duties of shepherding are, in order of importance: feeding, watering, and resting; guarding, protecting, and sheltering from attack and danger, especially from getting lost; help with birthing, parenting, and nurturing. It is difficult to see how any merely human shepherd can be equipped for such work, since he is also a sheep, and part of the flock, a senior member. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Συναχθέντων, from synagogue refers to an official convention or meeting for worship or judgment, not a casual fellowship meeting. Yet the letter is addressed to the church of God at Corinth (1:2), so this must be construed to be a meeting of the whole Corinthian Church, and not simply a meeting of the presbyters. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Such judgment seems quite severe to us. Where in the Old Testament do we find specific authority for such an act? The idea is only found here and in 1 Timothy 1:20. We cannot find any such Old Testament reference, or source in extra-biblical literature. It would appear that the Spirit has authorized something that is not found previously in Scripture, inerrant or not. It should be clear that Paul himself, as well as the Corinthian church, which he advises, is participating with the Corinthian church in something outside of the bounds of Scripture: yet Article 2 insists that no such authority exists, not for Paul, local churches, or any other individual(s). Indeed, why should the sinner submit to having his conscience bound under such circumstances, since this binding is not from Scripture. We understand that Paul could have come at this a different way from Torah, yet this is not what he does: he seems to be arguing from natural law, rather than from Torah, as he certainly does elsewhere. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Several factors seem to be at play here. Evidently, the Corinthians were tearing themselves to shreds over the most petty or earthly physical matters. Paul notes that the person who was most hurt by such irrational abuse, is the person most qualified to judge. Often, people who are abused, once they are healed, are the most gentle and sensitive to the pain of others. Since a great deal of earthly pride is also bound up in such matters, even the lowliest person has the Spirit to get this sorted out. It is a disgrace of the Corinthian church that this is not already sorted out; so Paul recommends the lowly to shame those who think themselves noble and wise. This emphasizes the authority of local churches as well as The Church in aggregate.

    NKJV and SBLGNT make this into a question. This is an opinion; no textual warrant for this opinion is found; not even R&P agree. We believe that the interrogative imperative, which is possible, would necessarily be translated, “Would you please seat the rejected in The Church?” not, “Do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?” which we believe is grammatically unlikely, since it expects an interrogative pronoun.

    Paul might have simply commanded obedience, if this were a dictatorship. The Corinthians will grow more if they learn to solve their own problems in the power of the Spirit. Developing spiritual dependency on apostolic leadership is no help at all; this is not how Christ trained His Apostles. No mention of finding Scripture solutions is made: Scripture is not a record of authority or guide for petty earthly physical matters. Nevertheless, there does not seem to be any legal precedent for Paul’s recommendation; so Paul is again finding a path that does not come from the Old Testament. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Therefore His delegation of authority is final; yet, He says nothing about the delegation of authority to Scripture. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. This appears to be talking about classes of angels called magistrates and authorities, not to earthly magistrates and authorities: it is unlikely that earthly magistrates and authorities would really be interested in such matters, being more threatened by them. Herod’s response would be more typical. So if this addresses classes of angels, who are the very messengers of God, how is it that they did not already understand this from Scripture? How is it that this must be demonstrated to angels by The Church? Is this not a clear indication of the authority of The Church over Scripture? [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. These may be the verses that gave rise to the saying, “God became man, so that man might become god.” The goal of the Father for every child is that each, and all together would reach the perfections of Jesus by the power of the Spirit. What this adds to our quest is the idea that, as Jesus has all authority, so shall The Church attain that same authority in Him. No goal of authority or perfecting is mentioned for Scripture. All of the authorities given in these three verses are for service work, not for dictatorship; each depends on a spiritual gift; they seem to form a list of divinely elected offices (which is strange because such divinely elected offices are not commonly observed today). This text was suggested by:

    <http://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Church-Authority,-Of-Eldars> [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. The important thing to see here is that The Church is directly subordinate to Christ, not to Scripture, specifically not subordinate to the Old Testament. This is not a claim that the Old Testament is errant. It is a claim that only Christ’s explanation and teaching of the Old Testament is inerrant: for the Pharisees and Sadducees have everything so kabolixed (an oddball spelling variation of bollixed) up that spiritual living is virtually impossible.

    Since Acts 15:29 reduces all the physical requirements of the law to “avoid adultery and idolatry” we see that The Church is clearly not under Scripture as Article 2 claims, rather Scripture is under The Church, which is exactly what Article 2 denies. The Church as the Body of Christ has all the authority it needs to correct the commonly mistaken understandings of The Old Testament. The Church alone is the heir to all the corrections stipulated by Christ, and she alone possesses apostolic authority to proclaim these stipulations of Christ, only by the power of the Spirit. Thus Article 2 is in direct contradiction with Scripture itself, and refuted by Scripture.

    Nor is the wife subordinate to her husband after the form of a set of rules and regulations; rather after the form of unbreakable mutual commitment and sacrificial giving. Neither is the wife the chattel of the husband; nor the husband of the wife: for both belong only to the Father, in Christ Jesus, by the power of the Spirit. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. How is it that He being first-rank in all things, that His body should be of no esteem? How does His Scripture, which is not mentioned, become elevated above His body? [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Once again, all the emphasis is on the development and perfection of The Church and nothing is said about the development of the New Testament, which is proceeding at the same time. Since Colossians and other books are part of that growing New Testament witness, we see that Scripture is primarily concerned with The Church and not with itself. The authority evident here is Christ’s authority, delegated to Paul, for The Church: Scripture is only an incidental agency for communication. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. This is sight with the internal understanding of the nous; not exactly knowing, yet not exactly seeing with the eye either. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. mind-set [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Don’t stint in supporting a wise, diligent worker, who is leading the charge. This is more about supporting the work than the person. People who are really dedicated to a cause have little self-concern anyway. This is one important way to measure their sincerity. Such leaders really appreciate any help with the cause: because the cause is all that matters. Yet not any cause, only the cause of Christ, bringing forgiveness with responsibility to the world. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Here authority is seen through its duties and limitations. The authority to do hard work, stimulate thinking, be generous, pursue peace, and deal with faults and flaws individually and specifically; these are not abilities we seek from Scripture. The Scripture stands at naught until it is brought to life by a faithful person. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Paul never specifies proper Church behavior. Instead he simply declares what The Church is, supposing that all will react with due respect, once they grasp what The Church really is.

    Now at last we come to a head-on clash with the affirmation and denial of Article 2. Paul obviously has an idea very similar to Ephesians 2:20 and 1 Peter 2:6 in mind here. Still, Paul does not say that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm; he says that The Church is the supreme written norm. Those who quibble over the word, written, miss the fact that covenants are cut, and the engraving on the heart is everywhere superior to ink on pages. Paul does not deny, he affirms that The Church in its creeds, councils, and declarations has authority greater than or equal to … the Scripture. The Church, not Scripture, is the Pillar and Foundation of Truth. The Church includes the inspired apostolic authors, who write all the New Testament books, receives them as canonical, publishes them, and applies them to life: none of which can be accomplished by Scripture for itself. Jesus also brings the Old Testament under the custodial authority of The Church, once the Israelite-Jews are stripped of their authority. Where can we find stronger language than in “Pillar and Foundation of the Truth.”

    Once Timothy understands who he is; namely, joint member of the “Pillar and Foundation of the Truth” he no longer wonders how to act, he knows with absolute certainty how to act as a tower and rock of truth. Paul does not here exhort Timothy to read more Scripture. Instead he details the mysterious glories of Christ. Timothy, with his eyes on the prize, which is Jesus, acts properly within The Church, the house of the Living God, because he is partner with that life in the Son. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. The absence of the accent on τις indicates that it is the indefinite, rather than the interrogative pronoun. This contradicts the punctuation. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Could this be the Chrismating oil? Could this be the sign of the seal of the Spirit? [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Where is this found in the Old Testament? From whence does James get his authority? If James does not get his authority from Scripture; he must be getting it from Jesus through the Spirit, else he is spewing heresy. Since, by this authority and power he is writing new Scripture, he must have authority over this new Scripture. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. The Scripture to be sure, yet τῇ γραφῇ·is not The Word. On the whole, the expression, “the writing includes,” seems much weaker than something like, “It stands written.” The Scripture reinforces the Living Stone; yet makes no claim for itself. Isaiah 28:16 [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. If there was ever a biblical opportunity to emphasize the authority or normality of Scripture over The Church, this would be it. Instead, nothing. Isaiah is merely quoted as a final witness to the obvious; even that is not very emphatic, “the writing includes.” The breathtaking authoritative and normative relationship is drawn between The Living Stone, and the living stones, who are like Him; He is the foundation, they the house being built; He was rejected so that they will never be ashamed. These things do not depend on Scripture for authority; they depend on the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Christ. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Each of these expressions relates something, which does not come from the Old Testament. The Spirit is not timid about leading The Church into new truths. He addresses each of the churches directly and personally. There is no indication that these writings will one day form part of a book of Scripture. There is authority here; yet, it is the authority of Jesus, it is the power of the Spirit, not the authority of Scripture. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. These last four words are adjectival, so there is nothing wrong with the translation, “bright and morning star.” We simply translated the way they would be read in Greek; rather than in English idiom. “The churches” looks back to chapters 2 and 3, the seven churches and all churches: this informs us that Revelation is all about Jesus and His Church. The theme is worshipful, not predictive. The task of The Church is to worship Jesus. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Do not fail to grasp the fact that John is declaring and exercising his personal authority, delegated to him from Christ. John’s received authority is directed immediately to his listeners; he does not “give evidence to the words” themselves; rather, he affirms that his authority comes from God, and God will judge. John does not affirm any authority for Scripture itself. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. John is standing in the middle of a church service; Revelation has all the earmarks of being the morning homily. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Prophecy has very little to do with predicting the future; rather, prophecy is behaviorally focused: if you do this, God will certainly do that. The future is only incidental to the behavior. For example we rarely think of Torah, the largest single collection of one author, Moses, as prophecy; Yet, prophecy is the correct literary class for Torah. Most of Revelation is behavior, particularly worship behavior, which is going on as John watches. That being said, it is characteristic behavior; people do such-and-such habitually all the time: God’s response to human failure and victory is consistent, and can be seen in worship as the way that God replies to man all the time. Hence, the behavior of which we speak is eternal, or nearly eternal: it will continue as long as people live in the flesh; God’s response will never end. He is the same yesterday, now, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). Tomorrow, we will still be sinning, and God will still be warning and forgiving: the turmoil will go on indefinitely, and seven will always trump six. We live within the great spiritual war, where one day of battle looks much like all the rest: this is the heart of worship, to see and enter into this spiritual battle. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. John returns us to the blessings and cursings of Deuteronomy. Then, at last he returns to the expulsion of Adam and Zoe from the garden.

    The stripes remind us of the Roman style of swift trial and punishment; the fasces lictoriae or lictors’ bundles were bound tightly together with an axe in the middle, symbolizing the unity and power of the empire; one judged as acting against the unity of the empire saw the rods unbundled followed either by stripes from the rods, or amputation of the head with the axe.

    For gross sins of omission (cut-off), the sinner is kept far away from the tree of life in the garden, separated from the source which is the holy city, and loses all access to the book, which is most likely the little book of Revelation 10.

    Since this is the only passage we have studied where the book has been prominently featured, as it is throughout all of this twenty-second chapter, we do well to consider it further to see if it possesses authority. Our conclusion is that it possesses no authority, it faithfully expresses and records for posterity that authority which Jesus delegated through John to The Church. John has thoroughly digested the Scripture, and now gives it to us to eat; the Scripture is nourishing, true, and beneficial in every way; yet, the custody of the Scripture remains with The Church, because Jesus, the ultimate authority requires it to be so. If anyone is inclined to argue, let them argue with the Spirit, who has the power to argue. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Which is the exact opposite of the Chicago claim, contradicting it completely. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. *Systematic Theology*, the section on “Bibliology”, under “canonization”. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. The Council of Jamnia is a hypothetical or mythical Jewish Council that ostensibly, yet never really, took place around 90 AD. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. Either such confessions are incorrect, or this statement is incorrect. Take your pick.

    If your confession or statement of faith includes a list of canonical books; or your thinking includes an idea of 39 or some other number of canonical Old Testament books, and 27 New Testament books; a declaration of canonicity has been made. What is the basis for that canonical declaration? If that canonical declaration depends on a church, a council, a theologian, or any other human source; then such a canonical declaration is in direct conflict with this statement, “We deny that the Bible … depends on the responses of men for its validity.” So either this statement is wrong, or your canonical declaration is wrong, or you have to find a way to reconcile these two directly opposing ideas.

    Unless your means of reconciliation somehow shows Divine basis for the canon, your reconciliation fails.

    If your reconciliation says something such as, The Church decreed it… ; then you have just confessed that The Church does have delegated authority from God: that authority is over the Bible, and both Articles 1 and 2 are absolutely refuted by your confession.

    So this sentence from Article 3 exposes internal contradictions in several places. We, faced with such contradictions, are forced to chose the one we like best. This does not seem like a very safe method for finding Truth.

    The other option before us is that we must start over from the beginning, because nothing said thus far is reliable.

    On the other hand, if we claim that we men do have authority and a right to validate the Bible, denying the claim of Article 3, then we have either made ourselves into gods, or we have confessed that The Church does have canonical authority over the Bible. We just can’t have it both ways. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. Please do not miss the distinction here between what is spoken by God, and what is written by man. God only used written language as an instrument of revelation on three occasions, none of which survives. So while we agree that what is spoken by God is revelation; we deny that what is written by man is revelation. The written autographs are one degree removed from revelation. Copies and translations of autographs are several more degrees removed from revelation. More copies and additional translations distance us even farther from revelation. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. The solution to the problem lies in fresh revelation.

    Not the authority or power to write new Scripture: for that power seems to have gone with the deaths of the Apostles, who were eyewitnesses of everything that Jesus did and spoke. Not the authority to engage in irrational nonsense either (pseudo-tongue speaking, quasi-miracles, lying-sciences, political deceptions, false religions).

    On the other hand, we have direct access to the Father through the power of the Spirit and the authority of the Son. This direct access enables us to pray hard, think hard, study hard, and work hard; so that, coming together as the One people of God, turning one stone at a time, we can eventually arrive at the Truth. Jesus promised us that the Spirit would lead us into all truth. The key operative word here is lead. So we struggle in life, and there are no easy solutions. Unfortunately, this direct access to the Father has fallen into disuse.

    While many difficulties and uncertainties with Scripture remain; we do have some firm guidelines to follow. 1. The line of truth must follow legal precedent. Just because our Magnificent Creator’s relationship with Adam or Abraham, Noah or Isaac is difficult to follow and understand, we have no warrant for starting a new line of evidence. 2. We are not free to contradict reality or solid evidence. So, the line of legal precedent and evidence must intersect: because, God is author of both Science and His spoken Word. Our task is to find this intersection; it is our ignorance of the evidence and meaning (correct interpretation) of both the legal precedent and the real evidence that thwarts our progress. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. Jesus did not correct the Torah, which is the record of His conversations. Jesus corrects the Pharisees and the Sadducees all the time; a major portion of the Gospels is concerned with Jesus’ heads-on confrontation with Jewish interpreters, and interpretations: He refutes both Jews and Judaism openly. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. We believe that the conversation is extraordinary, while the writing is only ordinary, precisely because the 70 are not able to join in with Moses’ labors until they are spiritually gifted with spiritual portions that are similar in kind, yet less powerful than Moses’ spiritual gift: they could not do everything that Moses could do. By the same token, Moses is spiritually gifted; the implication being that without the spiritual gift of primary inspiration, Moses could not have talked with God at all. We make the distinction between primary and secondary inspiration precisely because the 70 are not able to do what Moses does, they are only able to follow Moses; the sons of the prophets are not able to do what Elijah does, they are only able to understudy Elijah; we are not able to do what the Apostles did, we are able to understudy them. In such a secondary role, we still enter into the conversation by the Spirit. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. Note that 2 Peter 1:21 is about speaking, not about writing. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. We showed previously that there is no evidence that God oversaw the writing process: this is an entirely manmade construct, a necessary logical step for a quasi-proof of inerrancy. Since inerrancy cannot be proved, this step proves to be unnecessary after all. Scripture does not support inerrancy: except for that of Revelation 5 and 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. There is evidence of error, mistakes, and the like in all presently known ancient manuscripts of Scripture. However, there is no evidence whatsoever of the sort of error suggested by words such as: “distortion or falsehood”. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. Words like autographic, autographs, and autographa may be new and strange to you. All of these words refer to the original text of a book or document as it is first written by its author. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. It is a theorem, because it cannot and has not been proved, either directly from Scripture, or by any other means. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. This is not a discussion of predestination, which is beyond the scope of these papers. Since, at this place and time, we are not prepared to take a stand on the theology of election and predestination, we are in no position to condemn or praise any opinion that others may have. We do not know: so, for the time being, we leave this as a mystery. Such a discussion would be disruptive of our purpose here. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. This quote is thought to originate with Churchill. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. “modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations” [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. We do not oversimplify the complexity of this conversation which includes, not only hearing, but also, dreams, visions, and other sources of information. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. Luke 1:22 [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. The idea of not dropping a letter i or even a whisker on a word applies to God’s promise of perfect fulfilment and not to any teaching of inerrancy. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. Luke 4:18-19 [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niagara_Bible_Conference> [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. the Spirit, not the individual [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. Jesus is not saying that they will be gifted with magical powers; He is saying that the Spirit decides how, when, where, and why; when He comes He cannot be seen: for He comes and goes in mystery. Since Nicodemus is a member of the Sanhedrin, and heir of the first 70-72 who served Moses in the wilderness, he should know these things. He should understand that he was chosen and gifted to be an interpreter and judge of all things scriptural. He should understand that the prophecy of Moses (Numbers 11:29) is about to be realized. Salvation will now invariably be accompanied by the seal of the Spirit (Chrismation or Confirmation): all of God’s people, without exception, will have some gift of prophecy. To “be born anew” is to receive a gift like the gift of the first 70-72 who served Moses in the wilderness. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. Numbers 23:19; Malachi 3:6; 2 Timothy 2:13; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18; 13:8 [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. “Writings” usually refers to the Old Testament, as it does here. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. infinitive [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. Let us not miss the fact here, in the middle of a discussion about Scripture, this act has nothing to do with Scripture. Revelation comes as Jesus’ actions, in and of themselves, call to remembrance the Last Supper. Modern man’s ears burn, because of the enormity of lying. The Apostle’s hearts burn, because of the invincibility of Truth. [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. Jesus is revealed in the act of repeating the service of the Last Supper. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. Is this a collective noun? Jesus opens their minds, not the Scripture. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
100. The story cannot tell itself. They have authority over the story as witnesses. [↑](#endnote-ref-100)
101. Ἀποστέλλω, which is to say, I Apostle or I Apostle out. I send out the official ambassadors. I dispatch the royal diplomats. I disburse My legates. You are My witnesses. [↑](#endnote-ref-101)
102. In these passages. Jesus, the perfect man spells out the details of the Old Testament which relate to Him; these details are taught to twelve and committed to thirteen Apostles with the express purpose of writing the New Testament. These Apostles have authority over Scripture. [↑](#endnote-ref-102)
103. These same Apostles, as we have seen before, reduce the ritual obedience, not the spiritual obedience, to Torah to refraining from idolatry and adultery. Thus they exercise authority over the Old Testament, because of their delegation of authority from Christ. [↑](#endnote-ref-103)
104. We might have discussed this issue under Article 1, and the topic of apostolic authority here. After all, both apostolic authority and the authority of The Church apply in both Article 1 and Article 2. Because, apostolic authority seems to come first in historic order; The Church seems to grow out of the apostleship: we elected to place these subjects as you find them. That being said, you will most likely benefit by meditating on these in either order. [↑](#endnote-ref-104)
105. It seems that this verb may be imperative, indicative, or subjunctive: all appear to have the same form. We reject the imperative (in the sense that the creative imperative would cause love to happen, without the willed agreement of both parties), because love must not me mandated, not even by God: else it is no longer love, it is coerced obedience. Since God does not even command us to love Himself (in the creative, coercive sense), it is difficult to see how He could command love of another. So even if this is supposed to be an imperative, it is a voluntary one on our part. It is difficult to understand in the English language, where we always expect the imperative to be obeyed, that the imperative includes a subjunctive or optative force: maybe those being commanded will obey, and maybe they won’t. We reject the indicative also, because, as a statement of fact and reality, it is neither factual nor realistic: men do not all love their wives. This leaves the subjunctive (could, would, should) a strong possibility and sound moral advice. [↑](#endnote-ref-105)
106. Ῥήματι does not mean either Scripture, Word, or writing; although it may derive from a portion of Scripture. Ῥήματι is a short pithy statement directed toward an immediate goal, need, objective, or purpose: it can comfort, confront, jab, poke or lacerate to shreds, as necessary or suitable. Hence it is a brief expression, quote, or saying, frequently from Scripture, almost always from the mouth of God: thus people are seen to speak as the mouths of God.

     Since the sacrament of baptism is so obviously in view here, the appropriate brief expression would be the covenant promise of eternal life, with the gift of the Spirit; in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit; based on the blood of the New Covenant: such as we would find in early baptismal formulas.

     On the other hand, ῥήματι stems from a verb meaning flow, so we may simply have lost a rare nuance because of infrequent use. So the phrase could simply read, “cleansing in a bath of flowing water (literally water in flow).” We reject this idea as lacking sufficient lexical support.

     One final question remains. From whence does the authority to baptize spring? It springs from the spoken words of Christ, not from Scripture. The covenant in His blood springs from His death and resurrection, even though there are many references to this throughout the Old Testament.

     See Matthew 4:4; 12:36; 18:16; 26:75; 27:14; Mark 9:32; 14:72; Luke 1:37, 65; 2:15, 17, 19, 50, 55; 3:2; 5:5; 7:1; 9:45; 18:34; 20:26; 24:11; John 3:34; 5:47; 6:63, 68; 8:20, 47; 10:21; 12:48; 14:10; 15:7; 17:8; Acts 2:14; 5:20; 6:11, 13; 10:22, 37, 44; 11:14, 16; 13:42; 16:38; 26:25; 28:25; Romans 10:8, 17, 18; 2 Corinthians 12: 4; 13:1; Ephesians 5:26; 6:17; Hebrews 1:3; 11:3; 1 Peter 1:25; and possibly elsewhere, since we did not check every possible Greek form. [↑](#endnote-ref-106)
107. Παραστήσῃ is literally, place beside, indicating an enthronement of The Church as Christ’s queen at His side. [↑](#endnote-ref-107)
108. indicative or subjunctive [↑](#endnote-ref-108)
109. As the last sentence points out, the whole point of this passage is not to explain marriage from the nature of The Church, even though there are reverse applications observable here. What this last sentence tells us is that marriage teaches us a great deal about the nature of The Church, not the other way around.

     Almost all of the things we can learn about marriage in this passage can be learned from natural law. Even many, if not most, pagan men want to be heads of their houses: that’s the way men are built. The wise woman makes her man feel like a king: men are easier to handle that way. Hence, many, if not most, pagan women are naturally subordinate to their husbands: since this frees them from being burdened with tasks that most women don’t like; as well as freeing them for tasks that most women love. Pagan husbands find loving their wives a natural thing to do: for the sex drive is exactly that powerful. Also it is natural among pagans to exercise a certain amount of personal hygiene. The motive to be a good provider is more than a cultural norm imposed upon the species; it is a strong part of masculine makeup. The urge to create a new home, follows the same path in natural law. We now understand scientifically that some of this is built into our genetic makeup: for men are far more prone to aggressive action and violence than women. We do not wish to overgeneralize this topic: for there are many variations. You get the point: we could have all of this discussion from natural law, without any Scriptural review of these controversial topics.

     The main point is this… Christ is not only mysteriously described as the Head of His Body, The Church… Christ is also mysteriously known as the Bridegroom for His Bride, The Church. Now a good deal of the mystery is disclosed. Christ is the head, the Savior, the leader: yet, what man has ever found success by taking a dictatorial attitude with his wife. Christ is not a tyrant ruling The Church with an iron fist. Rather by giving love and sacrificial service, by careful provision and protection, a successful church family is built. After obedience to the Father’s will, the nurturing of The Church is the second major element in the life of Christ. Yet, this is the Father’s will as well, that His Son build a strong family: so the will of God and the nurturing of The Church come together as the united goal of Father, and Son, as well as Spirit. The Son wants a successful Church: because that is what will most please His Father, and fulfill His Father’s will. The Spirit empowers such for the same reasons.

     In the mystery of marriage, husband and wife are never really joined, they always remain different people, except in the act of coitus, and in the resultant birth of children. As marriage is fulfilled in child bearing, and the lasting joy of a family, so The Church finds her fulfillment in the fruits of evangelism, discipleship, and lasting fellowship.

     There is an aspect of this that might be more understandable to primitive man. Christ “delivers” Himself for His Bride; He lays down His life to protect her from every enemy and threat. Modern man might have some trouble identifying with this necessity of dying to protect his wife and children.

     What does it mean that the Bridegroom is in debt. Among men, this may again have something to do with the power of the sex drive, as well as with fathering. We do not believe that this is a real debt; rather, it is a love debt. The feelings of gratitude in a man and the excitement of first becoming a father are so strong that a man feels indebted to his wife: he can’t have children without her, and she is the one that gets to carry the child. Men look on in awestruck wonder. This suggests that Jesus feels a debt of love for The Church: she is the one that supports Him in His main mission. Still, this is a great mystery. Thus, He enthrones her beside Himself.

     Now, where in Scripture can we find such a discussion about Scripture? [↑](#endnote-ref-109)
110. Θεόπνευστος is an adjective; there is no copula; it simply makes a distinction between writing that records God’s speech, as opposed to writing in general. To press this further is grammatically possible; yet far from certain. This is no basis for a doctrine of inspiration. [↑](#endnote-ref-110)
111. This common quote is highly misleading for Paul’s thought neither begins, nor ends here. There are no verbs in these phrases: the closest thing to a verb is a participle. Timothy is to complete the training he began in childhood, so that he can undertake the commission of God with confidence. Because of Timothy’s training, Paul charges Timothy to preach the Word, Jesus, not the Scripture or writing. Timothy, being made complete, now goes beyond his preparation. He is now able to preach Jesus, based on a foundation of Scripture. On the other hand, Timothy’s authority for action comes to him from the Father, through the Son, through Paul.

     The common approach, which takes these verses out of context, attempts to create a new definition of inspiration, far removed from what we actually found in Exodus. [↑](#endnote-ref-111)
112. In the first publication of these papers, many of them were titled, *A Rebuttal of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*. They were renamed because we felt that we were mincing words about a topic that had no evidence for its existence. There is only one surviving inerrant manuscript, that found in Revelation 5; of which a portion emerges in Revelation 10. However, *Chicago*, is not talking about Revelation 5, and never once refers to it. We changed because stronger language was warranted. [↑](#endnote-ref-112)
113. If the Apostles and The Church do not have such authority over Scripture to make such a claim, then neither does *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, being a minuscule dust particle in The Church, have authority to make the very same claim. How exactly is Article 19 not exercising, or at the very least pretending to exercise, new authority over The Church and Scripture? [↑](#endnote-ref-113)
114. Two experts well worth reading on this subject are Meredith G, Kline and Kenneth A. Kitchen. Both links have lists of references. We especially recommend Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1997), and to a lesser extent for this subject Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2003)

     <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meredith_Kline>

     <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth_Kitchen> [↑](#endnote-ref-114)
115. This is an exact and intended parallel with Good Friday and Pentecost: for it is precisely Pentecost, which constitutes The Church as a new nation under Yahweh, unlike any other nation on earth; not Good Friday, as well as Pascha, which set us free. The Kingdom of God is born. [↑](#endnote-ref-115)
116. The sacrificial system does not teach that the people must offer sacrifices, as much as it teaches that Yahweh’s provision for His people comes at the price of the bloody death of an innocent. The lesser point must not be allowed to overwhelm the greater point. This is about the bloody death of Christ, nothing less. [↑](#endnote-ref-116)
117. The very graphic picture takes place in the slave market, where we stand naked, and on the blocks, for sale. Obviously, we are enslaved to our own sin and fleshly impulses; yet the graphic illustration “must not be made to walk on all fours.” We are not slaves of Satan. We are not slaves of God. We are enslaved to our own vices: this alone is what puts us under the Law, our own vices which we are powerless to overcome in the flesh, no matter what we will. There is no “Ransom Paid to Satan” here. Neither is their any “Ransom Paid to God”. The whole emphasis of the passage is not about what we are purchased from; yes, rather, what we are being purchased to and for: to be the children of God, and heirs of the promise Galatians 3:29; Hebrews 6:17; 11:19; James 2:5). So let us avoid by all means, radical theories of the Atonement, which have no real basis in Scripture. It is not what we are redeemed from that matters; it is that new life which lies ahead that makes all the difference. [↑](#endnote-ref-117)
118. Genesis 3:15 [↑](#endnote-ref-118)
119. If you have been blessed or helped by any of these meditations, please repost, share, or use any of them as you wish. No rights are reserved. They are designed and intended for your free participation. They were freely received, and are freely given. No other permission is required for their use. [↑](#endnote-ref-119)