

“HOW SHOULD WE VIEW SCRIPTURE?”

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Through the years there have been various approaches to Scripture. From earliest times there were those who said the Gospel was not an all-sufficient guide in religion, as many Jewish Christians said that unless Gentile converts kept certain portions of the Law of Moses they could not be saved. The Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15), attended by the apostles, elders from the Jerusalem church, and others, came to the conclusion that Christ and His Word were sufficient for salvation. Soon after the close of the first century, others (most notably the Gnostics) taught that one needed additional illumination apart from the Gospel in order to come to a knowledge of the truth. Through the centuries church synods and conferences have added to and taken away from the teaching of the New Testament. It is not surprising that in our times there are various views of Scripture. On the one hand there are those who reject outright the Scripture as the authoritative and inspired Word of God. On the other hand there are those who believe the Scripture to be the final, complete, authoritative, inspired Word of God (this is what I believe -- JPL). Between these two views there are those who are now saying that “Christianity should consider calling previous words of God into question.” Others are saying that “the church must grow beyond Scripture.” A member of the church said that “Scripture must be interpreted in light of the culture,” suggesting that the culture decides the meaning of Scripture. This is what happens when people prefer human thought, human innovations and human agendas to what the Bible teaches. I have some questions. If the Bible is not authoritative as it is

for man as he is and where he is, of what real value is Scripture? If it doesn't matter what I believe, why does it matter if I believe? If the church doesn't know who it is or what it believes, what real influence can it have in the world? What is better than accepting what the Bible teaches (whether I like it or not), being a Christian only, and seeking to be a member of the church of the New Testament? How do you view Scripture?