

# FINAL WORD



WHY WE NEED THE BIBLE

**JOHN  
MACARTHUR**

“At the bottom of many of the controversies plaguing the church today is the question of authority. Doctrinal errors and heresies thrive where Scripture is ignored or rejected. But God has spoken, and the Bible is His *Final Word*. No one in our generation has understood this more clearly nor defended it more courageously than John MacArthur. In this book he demonstrates—from Scripture itself—how and why God’s written Word must be recognized as the ultimate authority for people who confess Jesus as Lord. Such commitment to Scripture must never be assumed or else it will soon be lost. Read this book, and use it to help others understand how to live faithfully under the authority of Jesus Christ.”

—DR. TOM ASCOL  
Pastor, Grace Baptist Church, Cape Coral, Fla.  
Executive director, Founders Ministries

“*Final Word* is a profound and, unfortunately, very necessary book. I say ‘unfortunately’ because this book addresses issues that have been raised and responded to for generations. The attacks to which it responds are neither new nor sophisticated. And that is what makes its necessity unfortunate. It is unfortunate that the enemies of the Bible must be confronted yet again. However, confront them we must, and that is precisely what John MacArthur does in *Final Word*. May this profound and necessary book bolster your faith in God’s Word as it answers questions, dispels myths, and reasserts the inerrancy, sufficiency, and beauty of the Scriptures.”

—DR. VODDIE BAUCHAM  
Dean of the seminary  
African Christian University, Lusaka, Zambia

“In every generation, God raises up one primary champion to contend for the authority and sufficiency of the written Word of God. In the sixteenth century, that valiant individual was Martin Luther. In the nineteenth century, the leading figure was Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. I believe history will reveal that for the twenty-first century, John MacArthur has been that strong man who has stood immovable for the divine inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture. For more than half a century, MacArthur has advanced to the frontlines in the battle for the Bible and has fought the good fight to defend it against the relentless assaults of radical unbelief. Read this book, *Final Word*, and you will be fortified and emboldened in your faith.”

—DR. STEVEN J. LAWSON  
Founder and president  
OnePassion Ministries, Dallas

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LIGONIER MINISTRIES

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- Chapter One -

# THE BIBLE IS UNDER ATTACK

**E**lizabeth Charles, the hymn writer who gave us “Praise Ye the Triune God,” was also a novelist. She wrote a work of historical fiction set in early sixteenth-century Germany—the dawn of the Protestant Reformation. Leo X has just issued the papal bull *Decet Romanum pontificem* formally excommunicating Martin Luther. Roman Catholic officials go on a quest to silence Luther’s teaching and intimidate his followers. Luther’s works are publicly burned. Anyone who admits to being in agreement with him is arrested and charged with heresy. One of the novel’s characters is a monk named Fritz who decides to confess his agreement with Luther on the doctrine of justification by faith, even though he knows it means he too will be excommunicated and sent to prison. The character, Fritz, explains his willingness to confess:

It is the truth which is assailed in any age which tests our fidelity. It is to *confess* we are called, not merely to *profess*.

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If I profess, with the loudest voice and the clearest exposition, every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christianity. Where the battle rages the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battle-field besides is mere flight and disgrace to him if he flinches at that one point.<sup>1</sup>

Fritz's statement reflects Luther's own perspective about the importance of standing firm when a particular point of biblical doctrine is under fierce assault—and especially when the consequences of defending a controversial truth are costly. Such an insight on the Christian's duty to be steadfast and immovable has never been more important than it is today.

Without a doubt, the ground Satan most vigorously and continuously attacks these days is the trustworthiness of Scripture—its authority, sufficiency, inerrancy, integrity, and perspicuity. The battle for the truth is the battle for the Bible, and in this fight God's people cannot flinch. Biblical truth is under relentless and endless assault. And like Luther and the heroes of the early Reformation, we must meet the enemy head-on and be willing to stand and fight for the truth, especially when others avoid or even abandon truth when it becomes controversial.

## Satan's Ancient Strategy

Where did the war for the truth begin? In Genesis 3, we see the first instance of Satan's strategic assault on God's Word:

## THE BIBLE IS UNDER ATTACK

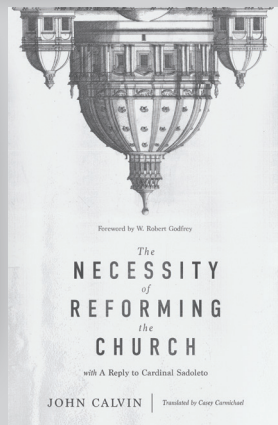
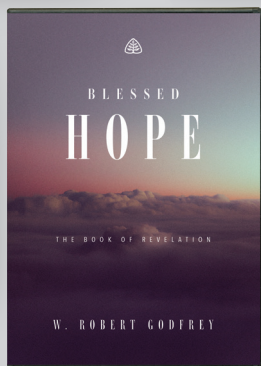
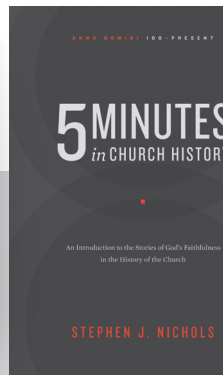
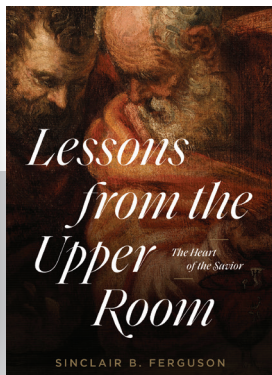
Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Gen. 3:1–5)

Satan earns his title as the “father of lies” (John 8:44) here in Genesis 3. He is the source of the first lie, which was the serpent’s falsely telling Eve that God was lying to her. And he has relentlessly continued sowing that same doubt and distrust in God’s Word ever since. In fact, the only time Satan is ever consistent is in his lying. Everything in him is lies and deceit.

In the garden, he begins with what sounds like an innocuous question that might come from a disinterested observer. He pretends he is concerned only for Eve’s well-being. Soon, any imagined neutrality disappears as he boldly claims to know more than God does. He insinuates that God is wrong and he is right. God may have said that they would die, but Satan assures Eve they won’t. This perverse deception that we see in Genesis 3 is repeated throughout history: God says one thing; Satan says God is a liar and counters with a different story.

It is instructive for us to examine Satan’s time-tested strategy.

We want to see men and women around the world connect the deep truths of the Christian faith to everyday life.



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