

*“The First Vow: What Do You Believe About the Bible?”*  
**2 Timothy 3:14–17**

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**I. Why do we take vows of membership? —**

- Vows are *public promises* that we expect God and other human witnesses to hold us accountable to. On one level, we shouldn’t need them (e.g., Matt. 5:34–37), on another they are appropriate and helpful (cf. Num. 30:2) — they “leverage” our faithfulness and obedience.
- The OPC “membership vows” ask us to *pledge ourselves from the heart to certain beliefs* — about the Bible, God, sin and salvation, service to God, and participation in the common worship and life of the church.
- As a covenant child, you are expressing in these vows what is *implicit in your baptism* — you belong to Jesus (1 Cor. 6:19–20), because he loved you and gave himself for you (Gal. 2:20), and you are willing to take up the obligation to live for him in faithful, loving, obedient service (Matt. 6:33; 16:24–26).

**II. The first vow has to do with your beliefs about the Bible, for it is the foundation for everything else we believe**

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*(1) Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God, and its doctrine of salvation to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation?*

- We can only know God as he has revealed himself to us. Though we learn some things about God from creation, because of our sinfulness, we can only learn about God in a saving way from the Bible.
- The Bible is the only sure “foundation” for our faith (1 Cor. 3:10; Eph. 2:20) — by hearing and doing what the Bible teaches, we “build our house on the rock” (Matt. 7:24–25).

**III. What do you believe about the Bible —**

- The Bible is “the Word of God” because God himself, by the Holy Spirit, spoke through the human authors (2 Tim. 3:14–17; 2 Pet. 1:20–21; 1 Thess. 2:13; Hebr. 3:7).
- As such, the Bible is the supreme authority for our lives, it is absolutely truthful and reliable (John 10:35; Isa. 40:8; cf. 1 Pet. 1:23–25).
- The Scriptures are “able to make us wise unto salvation” (John 20:31; 1 John 5:13; cf. 2 Tim. 3:14–15) — ever since infancy (this is explained more in Vow #3).