The Bible
The first statement made in the Baseball Chapel doctrinal statement focuses on the importance of Scripture. It reads:

We believe the Bible, the Old and New Testaments to be equally and in all parts the inspired, infallible Word of God, ultimately authoritative for the Christian faith and life revealing God’s will for the salvation of all people pointing to the coming of His Son Jesus Christ.

This study will examine the Biblical and historical evidence for why Christians should believe this. It will also provide support for trusting the Bible in regard to issues of faith and what it means to be a Christian.

Inspired
Read 2 Timothy 3:12-17.
What is the key to enduring persecution and godly living according to Paul’s instructions to Timothy?

Why do you think Paul emphasizes the role of Scripture for giving “wisdom for salvation” in times of persecution? What is the purpose of the Bible?

The definition above states that the Old and New Testaments are inspired texts. In this passage the NIV translates the same term as “God-breathed”. The term comes from the Greek word theopneustos, which literally means God (theos) breathed (pneō). But what does this term imply.

Many Christians wrongly assume that God dictated His words through the authors of the Bible. However, it is more appropriate to see the Holy Spirit as the “prompter” or “composer” of what the authors wrote without overriding their own particular style. Instead, God provided what Christians need to know for knowledge of salvation through faith in Christ through this process.

Infallible
The second important term in the Baseball Chapel statement is “infallible.”

This word implies that the Bible is completely trustworthy in relation to what it teaches. In other words, the Bible is the rule or measure by which a Christian learns how to exist as a Christian. In this regard, the doctrinal statement affirms that the Bible is completely accurate in all it teaches.

Read John 10:35 and Matthew 5:18-19.
What does Jesus say about the Bible in these verses?
What do you think “the Scripture cannot be broken” means?

This view of the Bible also relates to a view of the trustworthiness of God. Look up Proverbs 30:5-6 and Numbers 23:19. What do these verses teach you about God’s reliability?

Read this quote from John Wesley regarding the veracity of the Bible:

If there be any mistakes in the Bible, there may well be a thousand. If there be one falsehood in that book, it did not come from the God of truth (Journal, Wednesday, July 24, 1776)

The Bible reflects God’s relationship to us through creation. Wesley’s quote indicates one important truth about studying the Bible: it, no our interpretations of it, is infallible. Therefore, we should not attempt to make the Bible a scientific textbook. The language of the Bible is written as simple observation and not scientific proofs. For instance, Psalms 50:1; 104:22; and 113:3 speak of the “sun rising.” This caused church leaders in the 16th century to challenge the claims of Copernicus and Galileo that the sun and not the earth was the center of the universe. These church leaders incorrectly assumed that the view of the psalmist was scientific and not metaphorical language (the same language we use today regarding sunrise and sunset!). Never make the Bible say more than it intends!

What does this add to your understanding of the Bible? In what other ways do people try to make the Bible say more than it intends?

Ultimately Authoritative
Re-read 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
The word translated “useful” in the NIV can also mean “advantageous,” “profitable,” or “beneficial.” According to verse 16, for what purposes is Scripture “beneficial”?

Describe how Scripture is useful for each of these purposes:

1) Teaching
2) Rebuking
3) Correcting
4) Training in righteousness
We Believe…

God’s Will
Read 2 Peter 1:16-21
Perhaps the most important aspect of the statement regarding what Christians believe about the Bible is contained in the last phrase of the doctrinal statement: the Bible reveals “God’s will for the salvation of all people pointing to the coming of His Son Jesus Christ. What does the context of 2 Peter 1 teach you about the coming of Jesus Christ?

Although Peter was an eyewitness to the life of Jesus Christ, he says something is “more certain” (verse 19) than his eyewitness account. What is it?

What does the answer to this last question tell you about Peter’s view of God’s word?

From where does prophecy originate? What does this teach you about how God has chosen to communicate with us?

Earlier in this study it was noted that the Holy Spirit did not dictate God’s message through the authors of Scripture. Here Peter uses a Greek word that denotes movement as the wind would blow a sailboat. This tells us that the Holy Spirit functioned as the guiding influence and did not “override” the free will of the human authors in the process.

Make it personal.
Read these quotes from key figures throughout the history of Christianity:

“My ground is the Bible. Yea, I am a Bible bigot. I follow it in all things great and small.” John Wesley


“The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid.” Martin Luther

What do these quotations teach you about the importance of the doctrine of scripture? How seriously do you take the study of God’s message to humanity? How can you become more serious about your time with God’s word?

For Further Study
Scripture, Robert Saucy.
The Canon of Scripture, F. F. Bruce.