

TITLE: **Can I Trust the Bible?**

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① **We need a point of reference.**

- Engineering.
- Mathematics.
- Construction.
- Medicine.
- The sports world.
- Education.
- Space exploration.

We must have a point of reference.

T. H. Huxley, the biologist friend of Darwin, wrote in 1890 that he visualized the day when faith would be separated from fact and then faith would go on triumphantly forever.

Of course, it then would be up to each individual to choose whatever “faith” was right for him or her.

Huxley’s day is here.

Listen to the talk shows, read the editorials, and get caught up in the best-selling books on religion and philosophy, and you will be struck by the startling realization that the spirituality of our day has been divorced from facts.

One can believe whatever one likes, no matter how contradictory or absurd. Every point of view, since it arises from one’s own feelings, is just as valid as another. Faith is indeed “going on triumphantly forever.”

Francis Schaeffer told us, only a strong view of Scripture can withstand the powerful pressure of relativistic thinking.

Schaeffer talked about a split in our modern culture variously described as between public/private or facts/values or secular/sacred. Secularists would like everyone to think the public or facts side represents scientific knowledge and objective facts, while the values side is just personal preferences and subjective choices.

Secularists put religion into the “values” category, taking it out of the realm of true and false altogether: “Secularists can then assure us that of course they ‘respect’ religion, while at the same time denying that it has any relevance to the public realm.”

Many of us were born into a culture where the Bible was at least respected, if not believed and practiced.

Today, all of this is lost. Our postmodern culture rejects the of absolute truth and instead embraces personal experience.

Spirituality is a private matter; beliefs are accepted or rejected according to one's personal beliefs.

We must develop a deep conviction that the real battle of our day is not moral; it is not the proliferation of pornography, the desecration of our educational system, nor abortion on demand. All of these are but symptoms of failing to address the deeper question:

Has God left us a Word that tells us how to be in right relationship to Him?

Is truth something that I have a right to make up according to my liking, or is there a TRUTH from God that is an objective standard?

Schaeffer recognized the crucial issue would be:

“We are left with the Bible as an authority only in religious matters,” he wrote.

Here are some questions the Bible answers:

Do we exist after death?

What can we expect on the other side?

Can we be sure that we will spend eternity with God?

Why does God allow natural disasters and human suffering?

In a world where there is no existence beyond the grave and everything will ultimately be destroyed, we must agree with the atheist Bertrand Russell, that in such a world everything is meaningless.

That would leave us ....as Woody Allen put it, “We have no spiritual center. We are adrift alone in the cosmos.”

Ravi Zacharias

One finds oneself in the vise-like grip of despair in a life without ultimate purpose.

**01 Friedrich Nietzsche**, who prepared Germany for Hitler, said, regarding God, “We have killed Him, but who will wipe the blood from our hands?”

Means..... if God either does not exist or is fundamentally unknowable, there is no answer either for our guilt or for our deepest longings for significance.

This past week....

Fox News

**02 Brit Hume**.....has been highly criticized for his comments concerning

**03 Tiger Woods**.

On Fox News Sunday, Hume said that ....

"The extent to which he can recover seems to me depends on his faith."

He is said to be a Buddhist. I don't think that faith offers the kind of forgiveness and redemption that is offered by the Christian faith. My message to Tiger would, 'Tiger, turn to the Christian faith..."

But if God has spoken, we can probe His words, study His ways, and heed His commandments. The Bible, if it is true, is like a light shining in a dark cave, guiding us to the door that leads to eternal life.

② Purpose of this study....

**The purpose of this study is to strengthen our faith in the Word of God.**

The purpose of this study is to strengthen our faith that God has left us with a written Word.... that the Bible is the Word of God.

**04 J. I. Packer**..... wrote

"if I were the devil," "one of my first aims would be to stop people from digging into the Bible. . . . I should do all I could to surround it with the spiritual equivalent of pits, thorns, hedges, and traps to frighten people off."

The late systematic theology professor Bernard Ramm noted the meticulous care that scribes took in transcribing copies of the Scriptures by hand: "In reference to the Old Testament we know that the Jews pre-served it as no other manuscript has ever been preserved. . . .

They kept record on every letter, syllable, word, and paragraph.

Author Josh McDowell writes:

"Compared with other ancient writings, the Bible has more manuscript evidence to support it than any ten pieces of classical literature combined.

There are more than 25,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament in existence today. No other document of antiquity even begins to approach such numbers.

Dallas Seminary professor, Daniel Wallace, has said there are 1.3 million pages of New Testament manuscripts known to exist.

Voltaire said that in a generation the Bible would be outdated, but after his death, his house was purchased by the Geneva Bible Society to

spread Bibles throughout Europe.

### ③ Reason One: The Bible Claims to Be God's Word

2 Timothy 3:16—17

16 All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

This is one of the clearest and best-known statements in the Scriptures about the origin of the Scriptures.

inspiration means ...that God “breathed out” and the result was the Scriptures. In other words, the Bible, metaphorically speaking, is the breath of God.

#### OLD TESTAMENT

(Ten Commandments)

Exodus 20:1

1 And God spake all these words, saying,

2 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Deuteronomy 8:3

...man doth not live by bread only, but by every [word] that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken...

Of course there are hundreds of instances where God is described as speaking. He talked with Adam and Eve both before and after the fall (Genesis 1:28—30; 3:9—19).

Then there is God's call to Abram (Genesis 12:1—3).

God spoke to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-4:23).

In each of these instances God is portrayed as communicating with people in actual spoken words, not simply through general ideas.

Human language is never viewed as a barrier in divine-human communication.

The distinguishing characteristic of a true prophet is that he does not speak his own words but the words of God (Deuteronomy 18:18—20). God says repeatedly, “I will put My words in his mouth.”

The Old Testament repeatedly claims to be the Word of God.

Psalm 119:89

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

140 Thy word [is] very pure:

then David declared....

Psalm 12:6

The words of the LORD [are] pure words: [as] silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

pure means refined, as a smelter, refiner, goldsmith would refine precious metals. Means tested, to prove true.

The Claims of the New Testament

New Testament writers speak with the same authority.

They cited the Old Testament as the Word of God and put their own letters on the same level.

1 Corinthians 14:37

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received [it] not [as] the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

1 Thessalonians 4:15

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, .....

1 Peter 1:23

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

IF WE WERE TO list all of the instances in which it claims to be of divine origin either directly or indirectly we would find over fifteen hundred statements that claim its divine origin.

John claimed ...

Revelation 22

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book.

#### ④ The Unity of the Bible

05 Joseph Smith claims to have received a message from an angel and thus the Book of Mormon came to be. But his claims are flawed for at least two reasons.

First, the Book of Mormon has been shown to be hopelessly untrustworthy at every point of its history; not a single geographical site recorded has been discovered nor has any event in the book had independent confirmation.

Second, there are no other prophets who claimed to have a revelation that was consistent with his.

The Book of Mormon has but one author, a man who plagiarized much of his material and whose personal character is suspect.

Subjected to the same kind of evaluation, Mohammed, the author of the Qur'an, is no better.

In contrast, the Bible is really a library of sixty-six books written by about forty different authors over a period that spans fifteen hundred years. If one of the most important characteristics of truth is consistency, we must ask, does the Bible present a unified story line?

Consider:

It evolved over a period of fifteen centuries, written in three different languages. During this period empires rose and fell and cultures came and went, but this did not affect the unity of the Bible. The intricacy of its message and history simply could not have been orchestrated by a man or a group of men.

- It was written by forty different human authors. These came from a variety of occupations: kings, fishermen, tax collectors, shepherds, prophets, and even a physician. In all it would be difficult to find a more diverse collection of writers. They include Moses, who was highly educated, to Peter, who was a fisherman.

Though they wrote at different periods of world history, their writings perfectly join together with one another, not superficially, but in detail with unmatched brilliance.

- The books were penned under different circumstances and in different countries and cultures, such as were in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Paul wrote from a dungeon in Rome, James wrote from Jerusalem, Moses from the Sinai, and Daniel from Babylon.

- The Bible discusses diverse theological matters, such as the nature of God and His purposes, the characteristics of both good and evil angels, and the nature of man and God's plan of redemption. It would be difficult enough to get ten men to agree on so much as one single theological issue, much less forty men agreeing on matters about which others can only speculate.

Imagine, say, a book on medicine written by forty different authors over a period of fifteen centuries. And yet, also imagine that the book is so up-to-date that it can still cure the sick today!

Surely, we would have to admit that such agreement is remarkable.

Daniel did not know what Ezekiel had written....or any of the prophets would not have known the message their contemporaries were giving.

In the New Testament, the writers wrote independently of each other.

#### CONSIDER

1. Its Hatred - It is the most hated of books.
  - a. It's an authority and people reject authority
  - b. Men hate and reject it because they are ignorant of it's truth

1) The truths of sin, judgment, and Hell are bitter to them  
2) Men reject it because they are too busy with the things of this world to heed the Bible.

2. It's Survival - The Bible has survived every attack against it

a. Men have tried to destroy it. By burning - by ridicule - By so called science but it still survived

b. Men have tried to outlaw it. - Under penalty of death or imprisonment if you owned one.

c. Men have tried to pervert it. Add to it or take away from it.

One of the greatest errors of the Cults is the accusation that the word of God became corrupted and so that is why they came along with their ""scriptures"".

d. Men have tried to hide it. in dead languages in perverted translations

3. It's Prominence - It is the Monarch of books The king among books. It rules over all.

a. The printing press came into existence because of the Word of God.

b. The Bible was also the first book ever printed on the printing press,

c. it's the best selling book of all time.

### The Unity of Theme

The Bible is not a collection of books on many different topics; there is only one theme, and that is the topic of Christ and the redemption He provided.

The book of Genesis begins with creation, the fall of man, and God's plan to redeem at least a part of humanity from the effects of human rebellion. Thus we might say that the theme of the Bible can be stated in two words: sin and the grace of the coming Redeemer.

Right after the fall, God promised...

#### Genesis 3

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The Bible does not have sixty-six stories to tell, but one story of God's response to man's rebellion.

Christ confirmed that the theme of the Bible was His own coming.

He said

#### John 5:39

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they

are they which testify of me.

And ....

46 Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.

Jesus frequently referred to Scripture as pointing to Himself. He indicted the nation for rejecting Him (Matthew 21:42—46; cf. Psalm 118:22—23).

Martin Luther said.... and was right when he said, “Christ is involved in the Scriptures as a body in its clothes.”

### ⑤ The Decision You Cannot Avoid

The Bible is either true, or it is a forgery; it is either a good book or an indescribably bad book; it is either the Word of God or the misleading, deceptive words of men.

It is either a fact or a fraud.

If the Bible is mistaken regarding its own origin, we have no reason to think it is reliable about anything else. We do not have the luxury to pick and choose what we consider to be from God.

Psalm 19.7-10

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.