

Christian Discipleship Guide



“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)

1. Bible Infallibility

Today, Satan has launched a serious attack on God's Word. Liberals and modernists from every side have attempted to destroy the integrity and reliability of the Bible by casting doubt on its accuracy. They say that it only contains the words of God. Consequently, there are, at the time of this publication, over 400 different English versions of the Bible available on the market. This does nothing but cause confusion in the hearts of believers and non-believers alike. "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace..." (1 Corinthians 14:33), hence, you must study the concept of Biblical infallibility so that you will not be tossed to and fro.

So, is the BIBLE true? Is it a trustworthy, supernatural book? Or, is it an antiquated collection of folk tales and superstitions? Many people reject the Bible, dismissing it as full of errors and therefore unreliable, so they ignore its message and say it has no relevance for them. Is there any evidence to back up the claims that the Scriptures are true? Actually, there are numerous pieces of evidence that can be examined. Here are several.

Evidence from Prophecy

No book other than the Bible has ever given precise predictions of future events hundreds of years in advance, predictions that were fulfilled exactly. Far from vague generalities or guesses, like those given by fortunetellers, the prophecies in Scripture contain explicit details that no human could possibly devise on their own. Imagine trying to come up with the name, ancestry, birthplace, and manner of death for a person who would be born 700 years from now. That would be humanly impossible! Only God could make such predictions and see them carried out perfectly. But that is exactly what we have in the Bible. Jesus' identity, name, birthplace, triumphal entry into Jerusalem, betrayal, suffering, death, and burial were all foretold in the Old Testament at least 700 years before He was born.

Jesus fulfilled more than 300 prophecies in the Old Testament by His birth, life, death, and resurrection! If only 48 of these prophecies were fulfilled by one person, the odds would be 1 in 10^{157} , that is, 1 followed by 157 zeros! In addition, no other religion in the world has a founder and leader who rose from the dead and whose tomb is empty.

God's prophets also predicted the downfall of many nations, including Ammon, Edom, Moab, and Philistia. They predicted the downfall of cities such as Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre, and Sidon. And not one of these nations or cities exists today!

About 150 years before Cyrus, king of Persia, was born, Isaiah predicted his birth, gave his name, and foretold that he would release the Jews from captivity (*Isaiah 44:28*). And Josiah, one of Judah's kings, was named 300 years before he was born (*1 Kings 13:2*). Only God could have revealed these facts, a clear indication of the supernatural origin and nature of the Bible.

Prophecy, then, stands up in court as a strong witness that the Bible is true!

Evidence from Archaeology

Critics have questioned many of the Bible's historical statements, yet archaeological discoveries in recent decades have turned up evidence that proves them wrong. For example, the Bible refers to the Hittite people 36 times. Since no record outside the Bible had affirmed their existence, objectors said the Bible could not be trusted. However, excavations in Turkey have now shown that the Hittite Empire was extensive.

The Elba Tablets, discovered in Syria in the 1960s, include the names of Ur, Sodom, and Gomorrah, cities that Bible opponents said did not exist. These tablets also dispel the notion that (since writing was not practiced in the 1400s B.C.) Moses could not have written the first five books of the Bible. Yet these tablets were written about 1,000 years before Moses!

The Bible's references to the many Assyrian kings are accurate. Archaeologists have uncovered Assyrian artifacts that record the names of all these kings. Certain customs recorded in Genesis are also noted in the Nuzi Tablets found in present-day Iraq.

So again and again, archaeology gives strong evidence that disproves the claims of the critics of the Bible.

Evidence from Science

Many people think that the Bible has scientific errors. But the Bible is accurate when it addresses various aspects of science. Take water, for example. Water evaporates from the oceans, lakes, and rivers; collects in the clouds; and falls on the earth as rain or snow. This cycle is in accord with what the Bible says in *Job 26:8*; *Job 36:27-28*; and *Ecclesiastes 1:7*. But, for centuries, scientists did not understand this phenomenon.

Up until a few centuries ago, people believed the earth was flat; but, several hundred years before Christ, Isaiah wrote of the circular shape of the earth (*Isaiah 40:22*). And centuries before Isaiah, Job wrote that the earth is suspended on nothing (*Job 26:7*).

In 1628, William Harvey discovered the circulation of blood in the body. Yet long before that, the Bible recorded that the life of living beings is sustained by their blood (*Leviticus 17:11*).

Here stands yet more evidence for the defense of the Bible.

Evidence from Impact

If you read the Muslim Koran, the scriptures of Hinduism, or the writings of Buddhism, you will find no satisfactory answers to the following questions: Where did the universe come from? How did the human race originate? What is wrong with the world? Why is there suffering in the world? What is the answer to people's sense of guilt? How can people live upright lives? What will happen to the world?

Only the Bible answers these questions. Only the Bible gives an answer to people's grief, loneliness, sadness, bitterness, and hatred. Only the Bible tells what is wrong with the human heart and gives a solution. Unlike any book written by a mere human, the Bible can transform people's lives, make people good inside, and give them peace, forgiveness, and purpose.

Countless numbers of people through the centuries have been rescued from despair, despondence, and distress by the message of the Bible. This book has given hope to the spiritually hopeless, life to the spiritually dead, and deliverance to the spiritually enslaved. No other book in the world can make such a claim.

The Defense Rests Its Case

The huge body of evidence from prophecy, archaeology, science, and impact gives testimony that the Bible is God's reliable truth. If the Bible has mistakes in history, science, or geography, we

might wonder if it is reliable when it discusses spiritual subjects. But because it is trustworthy in physical matters, it is also dependable in religious issues.

The Bible's central message focuses on the problem of sin – and God's answer. Jesus died on the cross to deal with sin. In fact, He carried our sins on the cross so that we may have salvation by trusting in Him as our Savior. Because the Bible is trustworthy, Jesus Christ can be trusted. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (*John 14:6*) That is, He is the way to God, He is trustworthy and true, and He offers us spiritual eternal life. By trusting in Him, you (like millions of others throughout history) can find salvation and peace in Christ.

Bible Versions

With the multitude of different versions of the Bible that are available to us today, we should use a version that was translated from the most accurate and reliable manuscripts that were handed down from the early church. These manuscripts came from the *Traditional Text* that was preserved at Antioch and several other locations. After Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D., Antioch became the major center of Christian evangelism and for the preservation of the Bible. Translations from the *Traditional Text* include the following versions: Tyndale's (1525), Coverdale's (1535), Matthew's (1537), Taverner's (1539), the Great Bible (1539), Geneva (1557), Bishop's (1568), and the King James Version (1611). The King James Version built upon the strengths of earlier English versions. The translators also had a better understanding of the original languages (Hebrew and Greek), enabling them to produce a Bible that was a faithful and accurate translation of the very words inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Other manuscripts came from the *Alexandrian Text* that came from Alexandria, Egypt. Alexandria was a major copying center for Scripture; but because of the heretical and pagan teachings of Alexandria, the manuscripts were corrupted and false doctrines were introduced into the copying of the Alexandrian manuscripts. Translations from the *Alexandrian Text* include the following versions: Origen's Revision (250), Constantine's (312), Vaticanus (325), Sinaiticus (350), Jerome's Latin Vulgate (380), Wycliffe's (1380), Douay-Rheims (1582), Confraternity (1941), New American Bible (1970), Wescott & Hort Greek Text (1881), Revised Version (1881), American Standard Version (1901), New American Standard Bible (1963), and the New International Version (1973).

Conclusion

The Word of God is the most important and necessary element to the growth of a believer. It is as important as the sun and rain are to the growth of a plant, or as important as food and water are to the nourishment of the body. God's Word is a great source of comfort and also your only offensive weapon against the strategies of the devil. This study will aid you in seeing these principles and hopefully cause you to esteem and apply the Bible in your life. Read it, study it, memorize it, meditate upon it day and night, and you will steadily be conformed to the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Questions:

1. According to *John 17:17*, God's Word is the only source of _____.
2. According to *2 Timothy 3:16*, all scripture is given by _____ of God.

3. According to *2 Samuel 23:2; Isaiah 51:15-16; Jeremiah 1:9; Ezekiel 1:3; Hosea 1:1; Haggai 1:1-2; Zechariah 1:1*, Who is responsible for providing the words of the Bible?
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4. According to *Matthew 24:35*, how long will God preserve His Word for man's benefit?
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Additional Scripture Verses:

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 8:3; Job 23:12; Psalm 12:6; Psalm 68:11; Psalm 119:89; Psalm 119:105; Psalm 119:130; Psalm 119:140; Jeremiah 30:1-2; Matthew 4:4; Romans 10:17; Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 5:26; Ephesians 6:17; 2 Peter 1:16-21.