

# The Word of God (Part 1)

Why believe the accuracy of the original writings that form the Bible?

Isn't the Bible just one religious book just like the Book of Mormon or the Koran, etc? After all, they all contain good ways to live within them.

The Bible is very different from other religious writings which is why so many progressives and other religions hate the Bible and those who truly believe it.

First, most religious writings are written by one man who claimed it was the Word of God and they are actually a witness unto themselves. The Bible on the other hand was written by at least 40 different writers over 1600 years. The writers were highly skilled and educated to non-educated farmers and fishermen. They were rich and poor, soldiers and servants but they all claimed they were writing the Word of God in connection with the other prophets. Second, and more importantly this wide variety of writers accurately added to one big running story of Christ from Genesis to Revelation. Third, they don't contradict each other and they don't turn aside from the unfolding plan of God in Christ to restore mankind to Him. Last, the main person in the story does not witness unto Himself but all the other writers over 1600 years before and after his death witness about Him.

There are many liberals and progressives that call themselves Christian, but who have no interest in being a disciple of the Word of God, but changing it to suit their desires. These liberals have come up with a variety of theories to destroy a simple and plain understanding of the Word of God. Here are the common criticisms.

## **Reductive Criticism**

The writers invented or tampered with material to fit their theology. An example of such might be that Matthew and Luke put parables in different orders so that Matthew's fits his "Christ as King" approach and Luke fits his "Christ as man" approach better. This might be a problem if both writers were attempting to accurately portray the chronology of events accurately and the chronology was important. What they wrote and the accuracy of the teaching was what was important. The differences are also proof of the accuracy in writing, as opposed to each copying one account, they all gave their own account.

## **Historical Criticism**

Some say historical writers weren't very concerned with facts or truth, but changed history to fit their purpose. They can give examples of such in history where chronicles of kings usually omit their failures. This is however an ignorant perspective of historians. Herodotus, Lucian of Samasota and Thucydides are ancient historians who considered factual representation a must. We believe their historical accounts because they demonstrated such a belief. What did the writers of the Bible believe? It will be clearly demonstrated that they believed they had to be 100% accurate.

## **The New Hermeneutic**

The text is meaningful to each person differently. When someone believes this, they ultimately make the Bible say anything they want. Truth is not what we make it, but what God has revealed.

## **Contextualization**

We have our modern context, the ancient context and the Word. We shouldn't use *our* context to understand the Word in the ancient context. Examples:

*Prosperity Gospel* – fanatical capitalism is read into scripture

*Black Theology* – Bible is changed into a charter for positive discrimination

*Theology of Liberation* – Bible is changed into supporting terrorism

In each case above we make the Bible say what we want it to instead of learning what God was saying in its historical context, language context, the context of the passage and the context of the main theme, Christ.

In order to truly understand the accuracy of the Bible we need to consider the purpose for it in the first place.

## **How does God make Himself known to us?**

1. Through Nature *Psalms 19:1* "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork." *Romans 1:18-32* also describes that we become blind to this through rebellion and immorality, including homosexuality.

2. Revelation in History Acts 17:26-27 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, <sup>27</sup>so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us”
3. Dreams, Visions and Miracles ex. Daniel and Ezekiel
4. His Son Hebrews 1:1-3 “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”
5. His Word – The Bible

### **Why is the Bible accurate?**

Archeology proves the historical accurateness of the Word of God. Over many decades there have been people who doubt the accuracy of the history of the Bible. They have said King David never existed and then, lo and behold, they find proof in archeological digs. The writings of Egypt, Cyrus, the temple and various writings of Jesus all pertain to the accuracy of the Bible.

Much like ancient historians who we believe are portraying accurate accounts of history because of their written belief as to how important accuracy is, we have the Old Testament writers claim 4,000 times God’s inspiration. I will give a few examples only.

*Micah 3:8* “But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord,  
And of justice and might, To declare to Jacob his transgression  
And to Israel his sin.”

*Zechariah 7:12* “Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the Lord of hosts”

Compare that to *Ezekiel 13:1-3* “And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, “Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to those who prophesy out of their own heart, ‘Hear the word of the Lord!’”

Thus says the Lord GOD: “Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing!”

The passage in *Psalms 119:160* sums it up, “The entirety of Your word is truth,  
And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.”

### What about the New Testament writers, what did they believe?

*2 Timothy 3:16-17* “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” It is widely accepted that the reference to scripture here is the Old Testament.

*2 Peter 3:15-16* “and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.” Note that Peter not only describes the Old Testament as Scripture but also Paul’s writings.

*1 Thessalonians 2:13* “For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.”

*Revelation of Jesus 22:6* “Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true.”

The New Testament writers all believed the accuracy of the scripture and the authority of God.

The main parts of scripture that are argued as incorrect are the creation account and the resurrection account. The arguments stem from people not believing in the supernatural events and in a desire to always make scripture fit current science theories as opposed to recognizing factual science fits the Word of God. The writers of the Bible refer to the Genesis account in many locations. ALL writers assume the Genesis story of Adam, the Flood, Noah, Abraham, and Jacob are true. They refer to the 6 days of creation as fact. This doesn’t occur with some of the references but with all of them.

In *Mark 10:6* Jesus said, “<sup>6</sup>But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female.’” This account declares that the creation of male and female occurred at the beginning of creation. Some might attempt to add recreation here but Jesus states it exactly as a normal read of Genesis 1 would provide. In the beginning God created in 6 days all the heavens and the earth and all that is within them.

Some, further attempt to push the New Testament writers out, away from the actual time of Jesus, as some second century revisionists. The writings of the New Testament appear to the reader as being written and completed prior to the destruction of the temple in AD 70. This is noteworthy because a later writer would have had ample reason to demonstrate the huge amount of verses that prophesied this would occur and how, but the book was completed by that time.

Even those who do not believe the Bible is true, have had to publicly admit the references to the scriptures by all, including Jesus, in the New Testament are of complete belief in their accuracy.

The Old and New Testament writers consistently and accurately reported the Words of God and history. Unusual to many state historians, they reported the failures of the heroes and the kings.

### **Why was it so important that they be accurate?**

*Deuteronomy 18:21-22*

And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?’— when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

In fact they were supposed to kill that prophet.

Since much of prophecy is about Christ this belief in inerrancy of the Word of God governs our value of Christ.

“And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.” *1 Corinthians 15:14-19*

Inerrancy governs our response to conclusions of science as we examine science theories through scripture. We accept supernatural events because science proves supernatural events had to occur. The existence of life is a supernatural event and anyone who denies that is simply lying. Science proves that life suddenly occurred in all its forms and then a major catastrophe occurred, followed by large volcanic activity and an ice age. All things one would expect if a world wide flood occurred. The family origins of the people all occurring around the world at approximately the same time is what one would expect if the Bible were true. Factual science and history proves the Bible correct. We accept the miracles, the flood, the virgin birth, the resurrection. This is in stark contrast to those who were once called the mainstream of Protestantism. They have many priests that deny the truth of the Word of God.

Education, science, and wars didn’t empty churches, theological liberalism emptied churches. If the Bible’s history is doubtful and its words open to dispute, then people lose confidence in it. People want authority. A Church without authority is useless!

The Good News is that the Bible is the most credible of religious books. It is consistent. It is accurate. It is the Word of God.

### **What about the Early Church Fathers? What did they believe?**

Clement of Rome “*Truth*” “*nothing wrong*”

Justin Martyr “*no scripture contradicts another*”

Tertullian “*scripture true and binding*”

Clement of Alexandria “*first principle of instruction*”

Ireneus “*scripture is perfect*” “*god’s word*”

Augustine “*free from error*”

During the first five centuries, the people who knew the history, Jews and Christians alike, believed the scripture was the true Words of God and free from error.

**What About the Reformation?**

Martin Luther *"cannot err" "have never erred" "impossible to contradict itself"*

John Calvin *"Pure Word of God" "infallible"*

Reformers, Puritans and Catholics in the sixteenth century all believed in Biblical infallibility. It is the liberals of the past two centuries who have disputed that position to suit their desires.

John Wesley said, *"if there is one error there might as well be 1,000, it would not be the truth of God"*.

The inerrancy of the Bible is the fundamentalist and historical viewpoint of mankind for 1000s of years.

In the next few parts, we will examine in more detail what Jesus thought and what the Disciples thought.