

HOW I KNOW THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD PART 1

“Questions People Ask”

2 Timothy 3:14-4:4

New International Version (NIV)

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 4

1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

The major division between professing Christians today is: **no longer the denominations. The division is between those who believe the Bible is true, and those who do not.**

Our passage today predicted this would happen: that those who believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God would become fewer in number, and would be looked down upon.

I want to say, without stuttering or stammering, that everything we do at BBC is built upon the fact that this is the very Word of God...and without the assurance that this IS the Word of God, and that every word of it is true, we have no certainty about the way of salvation, we have no promise of a home in Heaven, and we have no standard to live by. If a church does not believe that the Bible is the word of God, then it has become nothing more than a social club...dedicated to the betterment of the community, always trying to make the world a better place to go to hell from!

We need to recommit ourselves to being more than just a social club/civic organization/ we must recommit ourselves to being a soul-winning/life-changing/bible-believing, NT church...and our final authority isn't some headquarters in Atlanta/a committee/deacon board/even the Pastor...it's the inerrant, infallible, God-breathed book called the Holy Bible...so we need to know it's accurate, and dependable!

That's why we read this passage today, because it contains **3 great truths** which will help us lay a foundation:

These verses answer the questions:

1. What does it matter?
2. Who cares if it's true?

These verses tell us that:

1. The scriptures are inspired II Tim. 3:16

Inspired means—"God-breathed"

Right now, you are hearing my words, by my breath...and while my breath passes thru my larynx, out of my throat, and is articulated by my tongue and lips, it all starts w/ breath...that's why we shouldn't cuss: it's bad breath!

When someone blows a trumpet, it makes a certain sound...he could take his same breath and blow it into a trombone, or a tuba, and it would make an entirely different sound! In the same way, God breathed His inspired words into 40 different men thru the ages, and while they sound out in different tones, they all originated w/ the same source...the breath of God!

We're talking about inspiration:

2 Peter 1 "16 For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." [a] 18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain."

(I've heard His voice, live and in person, and let me tell you...)

"19 We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
We're not talking about "partial inspiration"...for it says, "all scripture..."

We're not talking about "progressive revelation" ...because the book of Job and Genesis, the most ancient of texts, are just as much inspired as Revelation!

We believe in "verbal, plenary inspiration", which means the very words are inspired, not just the concepts or thoughts.

Fact: You cannot have thoughts without words any more than you can have music without notes/mathematics without numbers.

Matthew 4: 4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" **Matthew 5:18** 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

And so, we see inspiration...but the scriptures are also,

2. Instructive

They show us what is right

Look at 3:16—" *All Scripture is God-breathed and is **useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,***" (teaching)

There must be an absolute truth...there has to be a final authority, saying this is right and this is wrong.

Preachers used to stand and say, "The Bible says..." /then, "the church believes" /now, "it seems to me"

I want to know what God has to say, **my opinion is worthless!**

The scriptures show us what is wrong v. 16—"for rebuking" and, how to get it right "for correcting"

If you're on the wrong path, the Bible will set you straight, and put your feet back on course!

And, how to stay right "for instruction in righteousness"

3. The scriptures are instrumental ...for salvation

*v. 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **No one is ever saved apart from the Word of God!***

Rom. 10:17 “Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.”

Even the thief on the cross took God at His Word, and was saved! ...for sanctification

v. 17—“*so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*” **(mature)**

Your spiritual growth is measured, to a large degree, by how well you feed on scripture. for service

“thoroughly equipped for every good work”

Your usefulness is also tied to scripture.

II Tim. 2:15 “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

The scriptures are: Inspired/Instructive/Instrumental

Let's shift gears...

Why take 2 services to explore whether the Bible is the Word of God?

Many people don't realize that there is today, a major battle for the Bible going on right now...we're in a war in the world today, and even evangelicals are fighting each other over the Bible...whether it is the inerrant, infallible Word of God...you better know what you believe, and why you believe it!

The Southern Baptist Convention is still debating that issue!

We live in a day in which everything that is not nailed down is coming loose...and the devil is pulling nails as fast as he can!

It's time to get it nailed down.

Many in our society today hate it...they hate the whole concept of absolute truth/absolute authority...“nobody's gonna tell me what to do.”

Some despise God's Word, others deny God's Word (I don't believe it), others distort God's Word (twist it to say what they want), others dissect God's Word (cut out the parts they don't like), others disregard God's Word (it's irrelevant, unimportant), ...Even churches have replaced theology with “meology”!

Don't despise it/deny it/distort it/dissect it/disregard it...**but delight in it and defend it!**

The late, great Dr. R.G. Lee said, "The Bible is a book above and beyond all other books...as a river is beyond a rivelet/as the sun is beyond a candle in brightness/as the wings of an eagle above the wings of a sparrow in strength/...it is supernatural in origin, eternal in duration, inexpressible in value, immeasurable in influence, infinite in scope, divine in authorship, human in penmanship, regenerative in power, infallible in authority, universal in interest, personal in application, and inspired in totality! The Bible is the book that has walked more paths, traveled more highways, knocked on more doors, spoken to more people in their mother tongue, than any other book has ever known, or ever will know."

I wish I had said that! Wait, I think I just did!

With all that said, let's look today, and continue next Sunday, at the facts...**the Evidence that Demands a Verdict:.**

I don't believe the Bible is the Word of God by mere, blind faith...why do you? I don't like the term "blind faith." Because true faith is always rooted in evidence/based upon facts.

Ill.—S.S.. teacher asked boy what faith is. He said, "teacher, faith is believing what you know ain't so!" No, that's not faith!

Whenever someone tells me what I should believe, the first question I ask is **"Why should I?"**

I'm like the little boy who fell over a cliff, and managed to grab a branch as he fell...there he dangled, calling for help. He said, "is there anybody up there?" He heard a voice answer. "I'm here...I will help you!" "who are you" "that's not imp't now, let me help you" "what should I do" "just trust me" "ok, I will, tell me what to do" "let go of the branch"....he thought for a minute and cried, "is there anybody else up there?"

Our faith is not rooted in fable, it's rooted in fact.

Believing the Bible isn't a leap into the darkness, it's a step into the light!

So, here's some evidence to write down, and give out as you have opportunity:

2 broad categories: External evidence/Internal Evidence

The **heaviest evidence** we won't look at today: ...**the weightiest part** of the

evidence we will look at next Sunday ... **it's internal evidence**, when we look into the Word of God itself:

Scientific accuracy/historical accuracy/prophetic accuracy ... It will be compelling!

But, today some overwhelming external evidence:

3 external evidences that this book is truly a miracle book:

1. The miracle of it's origination

This book is really a library of books...66 in all. These 66 books were written over a period of 1600 years. They were written by 40 different men, from 13 different countries and 3 different continents...and yet it all comes together as a literary masterpiece, w/ one central theme, and w/out contradiction. That's a miracle...w/ a divine Author overseeing the whole thing!

Those 40 men came from a variety of backgrounds: doctors, fishermen, shepherds, soldiers, kings, princes/some were rich, some were poor/educated, uneducated...
...if we were to take 40 men from this room today, and let's say they were all equal in social standing, education, and background: if we put them all in a room together, the 40 of them probably couldn't ALL agree on any one thing, much less everything! And yet, God's Word stands w/out contradiction! And they all write about the same hero, Jesus Christ.

Did you know that you can find Jesus on every page of this book?

The Bible covers a variety of subjects:

Origin of universe/creation of man/beginning of sin/divine principles of government/rise and history of Israel/incarnation of Christ/institution of the church/evangelization of the world

Yet, with all of this variety, with all of these colors making its light, with a thousand threads weaving its tapestry, there is one theme from beginning to end: **Jesus Christ, and the redemption of mankind.**

Genesis: seed of woman Gen. 3:15

Exodus: passover lamb

Leviticus: high priest

Numbers: pillar of cloud by day/fire by night

And we could go on and on...

Needless to say...this book is a miracle

2. The miracle of its preservation

No less amazing than the Bible's origination, is its preservation.

In Psalm 119:89 scripture says, *"Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens."*

The Bible is not the "book of the month", it's the book of the Ages!!!

No book has been the object of more attacks/more scorn than the Bible.

No book has ever been despised and rejected like the Word of God.

It's been burned/ridiculed/outlawed, but amazingly, the more it is attacked, the more it multiplies!

III.—Voltaire in his day said, "in 100 years the Bible will be a forgotten book, only to be found in museums." 100 years later, Voltaire was dead, and his house was purchased by the Geneva Bible Society for the printing and distribution of Bibles!

Bob Ingersoll, a well-known atheist of last century, used to travel a circuit delivering messages on why the Bible is not true, said, "in 15 years I'll have the Bible in the morgue...

...he died 15 years later to the day! He was in the morgue, but the Bible lives on!

Many a man has preached the funeral of the Bible, only to find out that the corpse outlives the pallbearers!

John Cummings said, "the empire of Caesar is gone, but the Word of God still survives, the legions of Rome are moldring in the dust, but the Word of God still survives, the avalanches that Napoleon heaped upon Europe have melted away, but the Word of God still survives, the pride of the Pharoahs has fallen, but the Word of God still survives. Tradition has dug for it a grave. Many a Judas has betrayed it w/ a kiss. Many a Demas has forsaken it, but the Bible still survives!"

The Bible is a miracle in its origination...its preservation...

3. The miracle of its circulation

No book has been circulated like the Bible. By far the #1 seller of all time. Many people have given their lives for the cause of circulating the Word of God.

The Gideons are just 1 organization doing this, and each year they distribute over 500 million Bibles worldwide...and I have friends who have risked their lives to smuggle the Bible into countries whose leaders forbid it's distribution.....**and some church members don't even carry theirs to church.....what a shame!**

John Wycliffe gave his life to translating the Bible from Latin to English, against the wishes of the pope, by the way. (Wycliffe had spoken out against the pope that he was not infallible) After his death, the church actually dug up his bones and burned them, and threw the ashes into the Thames River...what a beautiful picture, though, of what he did for the Bible, for the river carried his ashes to the ocean, and ocean currents spread them over the world, and everywhere that waves lap the shore, the Word of God has been distributed.

It's a miracle book...in it's origination/preservation/circulation

That's just the external evidence, next Sunday. we'll look at the internal evidence...the weightier part of this message.

If the Bible is the Word of God, and we know that it is, then we are obligated to live by it.

And though it is widely available, and your friends, family and co-workers can purchase one any time they want, it's most effective when hand-delivered in love, by you, to them!