

How do I know the Bible's True?

- II Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT) “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”

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. The Bible is an amazing miraculous book unlike any other.

1. The miracle of its origination

The Bible 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 from beginning to end they all write about one central theme, the redemption of mankind.

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.

“Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven” scripture says.

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!

Voltaire, a French Enlightenment writer, historian and philosopher in the early

1700's, 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!

One person wrote, **"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 Gideon's are just 1 organization doing this, and each year they distribute over 500 million Bibles worldwide. There are Christians around the world today that are risking their lives to smuggle the Bible into countries whose leaders forbid its distribution!

John Wycliffe gave his life to translating the Bible from Latin to English, against the wishes of the pope, by the way. 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 its origination/preservation/circulation

We know that it is a miraculous book but is it an accurate book. There are three tests that can be done to prove if a book is accurate or not. The first is the

The Bibliographical Test – This is an examination of the textual transmission by which the documents reached us. As we no longer have the original documents, how reliable are the copies we currently have? How can we be sure that the documents we have, are accurate copies of the originals? How can we be sure that there have not been significant changes or errors made in the process of copying over the years?

How many copies of the original manuscript and how much later are they dated after the original. Let's look at the New Testament

1. How many copies of the document are available and what variances exist between the copies?

- More than 24000 manuscript copies in multiple languages / translations. Located over a wide geographical area (Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Italy)
- Textual criticism (examining copyist errors, corruptions) finds that there are only minor variations (spelling, phraseology, etc.) and is able to state that we can be 99% sure that we have accurate copies of the originals. What's more, no core belief of Christianity is dependent on any textual variant.

2. What length of time is there between the original and our earliest existing copy?

1. Several fragments have been dated within 50-150 years of the original documents. Several nearly complete NT manuscripts dating within 300-400 years of the original. In fact, there are 500 different copies of the NT that are earlier than 500 AD.

Other classical manuscripts considered historically trustworthy

- Iliad - earliest copy 500 years and 642 current copies
- Pliny - 750 years and 7 copies
- Plato - 1200 years and 7 copies
- Livy - 350 years and 20 copies

Additional evidence against the claim that there were purposeful changes

- a. Practically impossible
- b. All copies and language versions agree in content

- c. It can be reconstructed from the early Church Fathers writings (quotes)
- d. No time for the falsifications to occur or any evidence to support this claim

As far as the Old Testament: Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in the Qumran Cave 1 near the Dead Sea in 1957 were a thousand years earlier than the oldest dated manuscript previously known (AD 980), they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text. The 5 percent of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling. They do not affect the message of revelation in the slightest.

The Bible is TRUSTWORTHY when **Bibliographical Test** is conducted. The other test is the **Internal Evidence Test**

Internal Evidence Test – Were the messengers firsthand witnesses and are they trustworthy?

In examining whether the New Testament is credible (accurate/true) in its accounts of Jesus, they investigated whether the authors of the documents disqualify themselves by contradictions or known factual inaccuracies. This is done by examining when the New Testament was written (as the witness's nearness geographically and chronologically is closely linked to their ability to tell the truth), if it contains contradictions, and then exploring possible alternatives to it accuracy and credibility, namely does it contain fabrications, lies or myths.

They discovered that the New Testament was written in the same generation in which the events took place and that it was circulated among the very people about whom these documents spoke - while they were still alive to deny them. They discovered a number of reasons why we can safely conclude that the authors of the New Testament did not event stories or tell lies. They also concluded that the accounts of Jesus are not myth and that the New Testament does not contain contradictions.

In terms of the Internal Evidence Test, the New Testament documents pass with flying colors. When examining the internal testimony of the New Testament documents we can conclude that they are highly credible and accurate in their historical accounts.

We've looked at the **Bibliographical Test**, the **Internal Evidence Test**, and now

the **External Evidence test**.

External Evidence Test – This is often considered the most important by unbelievers, although it is not, as a test for validity. This test concerns itself with whether other historical material confirms or denies the internal evidence found in the manuscripts.

1. **Scientific Accuracy**

The Bible revealed scientific facts hundreds and thousands of years before science learned about them.

While it is true that the Bible is not primarily a science book, not a text book designed to speak to your mind, but rather a love letter to speak to your heart, we should remember that the God of salvation is the God of creation...and when the Bible does speak on scientific matters, it speaks with complete authority and absolute certainty and accuracy.

Every once in a while you'll hear about modern science disagreeing with the Bible. What should we do when this happens? Be patient, and give science time to catch up! Science has always needed to catch up w/ the Bible. Some examples:

Medicine:

As recently as 1600 doctors and scientists still believed that many ailments and diseases were a result of the human body having too much blood.

When George Washington became ill, his doctors bled him 3 times, the 3rd time they removed almost a quart of blood, and he died! But now, science knows, it's the blood that fights diseases/brings nourishment/repairs tissue/promotes growth. If only they had read Lev. 17:11, "the life of the flesh is in the blood."

14th C./black plague/decimated the population in Europe, as 1 in 4 people died!

It wasn't the scientists/doctors who brought the plague under control, it was the church. The church applied a principle to the situation that was unheard of in that day, but which we take for granted today...quarantine! Lev. 13:46 **All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.**

People in Moses' day didn't know anything about microbiology. They didn't know what a germ was!/virus was! But God gave them the principle of quarantine.

Not only do we see its scientific accuracy in medicine but also in

Astronomy:

We take for granted that the earth is suspended in space, hanging from nothing.

Ancient Egyptians believed and taught that the earth was supported by 5 marble pillars.

Greeks believed earth rested on the shoulders of the god Atlas.

Hindus believed earth rested on the backs of elephants, when they shook, that was an earthquake...and the elephants rested on the back of a huge tortoise, which was on top of a coiled serpent in the midst of a cosmic sea.

Aren't you glad you don't read that foolishness in the Bible!

Job said in the oldest of Biblical writings:

Job 26:7 (NLT) "God stretches the northern sky over empty space and hangs the earth on nothing."

That was a radical thought until just a few hundred years ago. How did Job know that perhaps 8k years ago? All scripture is given by inspiration!

Nobody believed the earth was round until 1492. "Columbus, you're gonna sail off the end of the earth...but 700 years before Christ, Isaiah 40:22 (NLT) said **"that God sits above the circle of the earth."** Circle in Hebrew Means globe or sphere.

Science has always needed to catch up w/ the Bible.

Science is not the only witness we call to the stand; there is also the witness of history:

2. Historical Accuracy:

Not a history book, but it is "His Story". And historians have always needed to

catch up with the Bible.

The Bible records the fact that Moses wrote the first 5 books of the Bible, and Jesus verified that in the NT. For many years, unbelieving historians laughed at the thought that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. 'That's impossible', they said, for there was no written language when Moses lived!

Archaeologists continued their work, and in 1887 in N. Egypt 300 clay tablets were unearthed, we know them as the "tel-el-armana" tablets. What were they? Letters and business transactions between Egypt and Palestine, dated centuries before Moses was even born. And now it has been proven not only did they have a written language, they had a postal service!

Remember the story in the book of Daniel of Belshazzar seeing the handwriting on the wall? For centuries histories mocked that story as mythology, stating that they have the Babylonian records, which show that the last king of Babylon was NOT Belshazzar, but was Nabonitis. As a matter of fact, they say, we have no record anywhere that any Belshazzar ever lived!

One day a clay tablet was found by archaeologists that revealed the truth: Nabonitis was the father of Belshazzar, and they were co-regents, ruling together! Nabonitis traveled the world, his son ruled the kingdom. Now we have a better understanding of Daniel 5:16 (NLT)**I am told that you can give interpretations and solve difficult problems. If you can read these words and tell me their meaning, you will be clothed in purple robes of royal honor, and you will have a gold chain placed around your neck. You will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom."**

What if that tablet had never been found? Should we doubt the Bible, no! But isn't it terrific how God makes His truth known, often times w/ an exclamation point tacked onto the end!

History is still catching up with the Bible. We have the Scientific Accuracy and the Historical Accuracy. The 3rd category is Prophetic Accuracy

Prophetic Accuracy

No book in history has dared to predict the future to the degree the Bible has, without being proven wrong.

For the sake of time, let's narrow it down to just the prophecies that dealt w/ the

coming of Christ, 2000 years ago.

Over 300 direct prophecies in question, like:

- Is. 7:14 He would be born of a virgin Lk. 1:7 it happened!
- Micah 5:2 born in Bethlehem Lk. 2:4 that happened!
- Gen. 49:10 born of tribe of Judah Mt. 3:3 that happened!
- Psalm 78:2 speak in parables Mt. 13:34 that happened!
- Zech. 9:9 ride on colt of a donkey Mt. 21 that happened!
- Is. 61 heal broken-hearted Lk. 4:18 that happened!
- Is. 53:3 rejected by own Jn. 1:11 that happened!
- Is. 53:7 stand silent before accusers Mk. 15:5 that happened!
- Ps. 22:18 cast lots for His robe Jn. 19:23 that happened!
- Ps. 22 (hundreds of years before crucifixion ever invented or thought of) Prophets said they would pierce His hands and feet, and it happened!
- Ps. 22:1 “my God, why forsaken me?” Mt. 27:46 that happened!
- Ps. 22: 5 tongue cleave to jaw Mt. 26:15 that happened!
- Zech. 11:2 sold by enemies for 30 silver Mt. 26:15 that happened!
- Is. 53:9 buried w/ rich Mt. 27 that happened!

One skeptic said, “**Certainly this is the most striking coincidence of details.**”

Dr. Charles Ryrie points out that, by the law of chance, it would require 2 hundred billion earths, each populated w/ four billion people, to come up w/ one person who could achieve one hundred accurate prophecies w/out any errors in sequence. But, in Christ’s coming alone, there were not one hundred, but over 300 prophecies fulfilled! And that’s just the tip of the iceberg, the prophecies dealing w/ His first coming!

Our Bible is a Miraculous Book and it’s an Accurate Book. Since this is so... don’t you think as Christians we should guard it, invest in it, memorize it, and apply it!

- II Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT) “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”