

# Do You Believe in the Bible?



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# Do You Believe in the Bible?

## INTRODUCTION

1. A growing problem is one of biblical illiteracy...

- a. Not just by those in the world
- b. Also in the church

-- "Americans revere the Bible - but, by and large, they don't read it. And because they don't read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates." - George Gallup and Jim Castelli

2. How bad is it? Consider these results from various surveys...

- a. Fewer than half of all adults can name the four gospels
- b. Many professing Christians cannot identify more than two or three of the disciples
- c. 60 percent of Americans can't name even five of the Ten Commandments
- d. 82 percent of Americans believe "God helps those who help themselves" is a Bible verse
- e. 12 percent of adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife
- f. A survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over 50 percent thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife
- g. A considerable number of respondents to one poll indicated that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham

-- "Increasingly, America is biblically illiterate." - George Barna

Biblical illiteracy is like a poison, wreaking havoc in the lives of individuals, in our churches, and in our communities.

3. But what reasons are there to believe the Bible...?

- a. Our study will offer several reasons to take it seriously
- b. The examples will be few, but illustrative
- c. Links are provided to assist in further study

*[I can think of at least five reasons to believe the Bible, i.e., evidences of inspiration, starting with its...]*

## I. SCIENTIFIC FOREKNOWLEDGE

A. EXPLAINED...

- 1. In the Bible there are statements related to astronomy, cosmology, medicine, meteorology, oceanography, etc.
- 2. Mentioned thousands of years prior to scientific discovery of these truths
- 3. Discovered in modern times with the aid of scientific instruments

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4. The writers of the Bible could have known these facts only through divine inspiration
5. Such evidence of inspiration confirms the Bible's claim to be from God the Creator

## B. EXAMPLES...

1. Stars too great in number to count - Gen 15:5; Jer 33:22
2. The roundness of the earth - Isa 40:22
3. The suspension of the earth in space - Job 26:7
4. The currents in the seas - Ps 8:8
5. The springs in the seas - Job 38:16
6. All nations of one blood - Ac 17:26

-- More examples can be found by searching [here](#)

*[Perhaps even stronger evidence for the divine inspiration of the Bible are the many...]*

## II. FULFILLED PROPHECIES

### A. EXPLAINED...

1. Prophecies in the OT foretold events in detail beyond the scope of human speculation
2. How did the writers do it? They attributed it to God!
3. God declared such evidence was proof of His existence and superiority over men and all heathen gods - Isa 41:21-24; 42:8-9; 46:8-11

### B. EXAMPLES...

1. Prophecies concerning nations
  - a. The fall of Babylon, written two hundred years before it occurred - Isa 13:17-22
  - b. The fall of Egypt, that it would be destroyed more by civil war - Isa 19:1-4
  - c. The fall of Nineveh, with its utter desolation - Zep 2:13-15
  - d. The fall of Tyre, with its becoming a place for the spreading of nests - Eze 26:1-5
  - e. The destruction of Jerusalem, fulfilled in 70 A.D. - Mt 24, Mk 13, Lk 21
2. Prophecies concerning Christ
  - a. Alluded to by Jesus - cf. Lk 24:44-45
  - b. It has been stated there are 332 prophecies fulfilled in Christ - Henry Liddon

-- More examples can be found by searching [here](#)

*[The Bible's trustworthiness is often confirmed in ways that can be checked, especially in the area of...]*

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## III. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONFIRMATION

### A. EXPLAINED...

1. The Bible purports to be a book of history, describing real people, nations, events
2. Discoveries by archaeologists confirm the historical accuracy of the Bible

### B. EXAMPLES...

1. Cities in Abraham's time (Ur, Haran)
2. Ancient empires once doubted (Hittites)
3. Cities in ancient Israel (Jericho, Shechem, Dan, etc.)
4. The house of David and Solomon's temple
5. The census at the time of Jesus' birth
6. Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilene
7. The Pavement (Gabbatha) in the court of the tower of Antonia
8. The politarchs in Thessalonica

-- More examples can be found by searching [here](#)

*[The Bible's trustworthiness is often questioned because we do not have the original manuscripts. But we have good reasons to believe that we have reliable copies, thanks to the science of...]*

## IV. MANUSCRIPT CORROBORATION

### A. EXPLAINED...

1. A bibliographical test is applied to all ancient documents, such as:
  - a. Julius Caesar's Gallic War
  - b. Histories of Tacitus
  - c. Annals of Tacitus
  - d. The New Testament
2. The purpose - to establish the likelihood that copies are:
  - a. Faithful representatives of the original manuscripts
  - b. Free from changes, errors, or collusion by copyists
3. Questions raised in the bibliographical test include:
  - a. How many copies of the document in question are available?
  - b. Where were the copies found?
  - c. What time has passed between the original and earliest copies?

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d. What variances exist between the copies?

## B. EXAMPLES...

1. How many copies of the NT manuscripts are available?

a. Over 4,000 Greek manuscripts; 13,000 copies of portions

b. Compare with other ancient writings: Caesar's Gallic Wars (10), Annals of Tacitus (2), Livy (20), Plato (7), Sophocles (100)

2. Where the copies of NT manuscripts found?

a. In various places: Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Italy

b. Such diverse locations make collusion very difficult

3. What time has passed between the original and earliest copies of the NT?

a. Several papyri fragments of the NT have been dated to within 50-100 years

b. Complete NT Greek manuscripts were copied within 300-400 years

c. Compare the time span with other classical histories:

1) Histories of Thucydides - 1300 years

2) Histories of Herodotus - 1350 years

3) Caesar's Gallic War - 950 years

4) Roman History of Livy - 350 years (and it is a fragment)

5) Histories of Tacitus - 750 years

6) Annals of Tacitus - 950 years (and there are just two manuscripts)

4. What variances exist between the copies of the NT?

a. Only 1/2 of one percent is in question (compared to 5 percent for the Iliad)

b. Even so: "No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading...It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain: especially is this the case with the New Testament." - Sir Frederick Kenyon, authority in the field of New Testament textual criticism

5. The NT has the strongest manuscript attestation of any ancient document!

a. "The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning. And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be as beyond all doubt." - F. F. Bruce

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b. "After trying to shatter the historicity and validity of the Scripture, I came to the conclusion that they are historically trustworthy. If one discards the Bible as being unreliable, then he must discard almost all literature of antiquity." - Josh McDowell

c. "One problem I constantly face is the desire on the part of many to apply one standard or test to secular literature and other to the Bible. One needs to apply the same test, whether the literature under investigation is secular or religious." - *ibid.*

d. "Having done this, I believe one can hold the Scriptures in his hand and say, 'The Bible is trustworthy, and historically reliable.'" - *ibid.*

-- More on this can be found by searching [here](#)

*[Finally, there is a more subjective reason to believe the Bible, based on...]*

## V. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

### A. EXPLAINED...

1. Those who read, believe, and obey the Bible will receive evidence of its inspiration
2. As Jesus stated: "If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority." - Jn 7:17
3. In other words, "He shall have evidence, in the very attempt to do the will of God, of the truth of the doctrine." - Albert Barnes
4. "He who in his heart says, 'Thy will be done, give me light and I will walk in it,' will find that Christ is just the teacher demanded by his soul, and that the gospel meets his soul's want. Jesus will so meet the wants of his soul that he will be satisfied and will know the doctrine, that it comes from him who made the soul." - B. W. Johnson
5. As stated in a familiar proverb: "The proof of the pudding is in the eating"

### B. EXAMPLES...

1. The Bible has transformed the lives of millions of people
  - a. It has motivated them to become missionaries, even martyrs
  - b. It has spurred them to care for the sick, the poor, the hungry, even enemies
  - c. It has made them better spouses, parents, friends, neighbors, workers
2. For one willing to obey the Bible from the heart, there is:
  - a. Peace to calm the troubled heart - Jn 14:27; 16:33; Php 4:7
  - b. Joy to lift our spirits - Jn 15:11; 1Pe 1:8
  - c. Love which casts out fear - 1Jn 4:18; Jn 15:9; Ep 3:19
  - d. Hope for facing the future - Jn 11:25; Re 14:13

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3. As a believer more than 50 years, I have found the Bible to be:
  - a. A source of guidance, wisdom, and peace with God and man
  - b. Worthy of my lifelong trust and obedience

## CONCLUSION

1. Reasons I believe the Bible are both objective and subjective...
  - a. The objective evidence includes its scientific foreknowledge, fulfilled prophecies, archaeological confirmation, and manuscript corroboration
  - b. The subjective evidence is seen in its impact on our lives and the world in which we live
2. I hope this brief survey of reasons to believe the Bible will encourage you...
  - a. To read the Bible
  - b. To believe the Bible

*Again, follow the links above to search for more information on evidences related to this subject. In our next study, I wish to share reasons as to "Why I Love The Bible"...*

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## Romans 10:17 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup> So faith comes from **hearing**, and **hearing** through the word of Christ.

## Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> And without **faith** it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must **believe** that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

## Acts 17:30 (ESV)

<sup>30</sup> The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to **repent**,

## Acts 26:20 (NIV)

<sup>20</sup> First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should **repent** and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.

## 1 Timothy 6:12 (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good **confession** in the presence of many witnesses.

## Acts 2:38 (ESV)

<sup>38</sup> And Peter said to them, “Repent and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

## 1 Peter 3:21 (NIV)

<sup>21</sup> and this water symbolizes **baptism** that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

## Revelation 2:10 (ESV)

<sup>10</sup> Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. **Be faithful unto death**, and I will give you the crown of life.

