

“Can I Trust My Bible??

Facing the Court of Public Opinion, we need to become capable defenders in the case of “The Reliable Bible vs. It’s Many Critics.” We will discover the internal and external proofs of the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the direct revelation of God to man. With this body of evidence in mind, and before our court is adjourned, we will be equipped to confidently make our closing summation: “God spoke through men that which is profitable and reliable. I can trust the Bible to transform my life and yours!”

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Introduction:

The Prosecutors: Those Who Question the Reliability of the Bible

The Defenders: Those Who Can Rightly Defend the Reliability of the Bible

“...always be prepared to make a defense (Greek: apologia = a legal defense) to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence...”

(1 Peter 3:15)

“I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to men. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated through this book.” (Abraham Lincoln)

I. My Theological Pre-Suppositions

- God spoke...Gen 1:3 “And God said, “Let there be light and there was light.”
- God spoke through men... 2 Pet. 1:21 “...men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”
- God spoke through men that which is reliable. 2 Tim. 3:16 “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable...”

Heb. 4:12 “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the divisions of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

II. My Opening Statement

“I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the direct revelation of God to man.”

III. My Presentation of the Evidence

Defense Exhibit #1. The Internal Evidence

“The best evidence of the Bible being the Word of God is found between its covers.”
(Charles Hodge)

Defense Statement #1. The human writers of the Scriptures claim them to be God's Word.

2600 times the Bible states “The Word of the Lord came unto me.” or “Thus saith the Lord.”

Internal Witness #1. The Apostle Paul

2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is inspired by God...” (Greek: theopneustos = God-breathed)

Internal Witness #2. The Apostle Peter

2 Peter 1:20-21 “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own

interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

Internal Witness #3. The Apostle Paul

1 Thessalonians 2:13 “And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.”

Internal Witness #4. The Apostle Peter

2 Peter 3:15-16 “...just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which some things are hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of Scriptures...”

Defense Statement #2. Christ Himself claimed the Scriptures to be God's Word.

cf. Matthew 5:17-18; 6:29; 10:15; 21:13-16; 22:28-33, 36-40; John 17:17 “Thy Word is truth!”

Defense Exhibit #2. The External Evidence

External Witness #1. The Bible's Unique Archaeological and Historical Accuracy

“It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever contradicted a Biblical reference.” (Nelson Glueck, Rivers in the Desert, p. 31)

e.g. The Nuzi Tablets, The Ras Shamra Tablets, Ancient City of Ur, Sodom and Gomorrah, The Cylinder of Cyrus: King of Medo-Persia

External Witness #2 The Bible's Unique Scientific Accuracy

Although the Bible is not primarily a science book, when it speaks scientifically, it speaks accurately. For example... Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning (time) God (force) created (action) the heavens (space) and the earth (matter)...” The earth is suspended in space (Job 26:7), is round (Job 26:10), and spins on an axis (cf. Job 38:12-14) e.g. Leviathan (Job 41:18-21)

External Witness #3. The Bible's Unique Prophetic Accuracy

e.g. Psalm 22 - written about the suffering Messiah 600 years before Christ was born and hundreds of years before crucifixion was even invented.

e.g. Numbers 24:17, Gen 49:10 Mic. 5:2 predicting that the Messiah would come from the line of Jacob, the line of Judah and the family of David. Jesus did (cf. Matt. 1:1-

17; Lk.1:31-33)

- Isaiah 7:14 (written 700 years before) foretells of the Messiah who would be born of a virgin
- Micah 5:2 - predicts that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem
- Zech 11:12-13 foretold that the Messiah would be betrayed for exactly 30 pieces of silver and that the one who betrayed the Messiah would buy a plot of land with the money
- Isaiah 53:9-12 tells us that he would be hung between two thieves and that his body would be laid in a rich man's tomb
 - e.g. Psalm 22:18, Zech 12:10; Ps. 34:20; Ex. 12:46; 16:8-11; 68:18 foretell about:
- spear thrust in His side • garments divided in four • executioners gambling for his robe • legs not broken though a common practice in crucifixion • raised from dead • ascending into Heaven

External Witness #4 The Bible's Unique Harmony

- 66 books • 3 languages • 1600 years • 40 authors • 3 continents • one world view • one assessment of human nature • one Lord • one faith • one central theme

External Witness #5. The Bible's Unique Character

"It's not such a book as man would write if he could or could write if he would." (Lewis Sperry Chafer)

External Witness #6. The Bible's Unique Preservation in History

e.g. Dead Sea Scrolls, some 5,000 Greek manuscripts plus thousands of relevant documents.
- "My Word abides forever."

"If we would destroy the Christian religion, we must first of all destroy man's belief in the Bible." Voltaire

External Witness #7. The Bible's Unique Influence on People and Nations

- Regarding the Bible's influence on civilization...
- Regarding the Bible's influence on government...
- Regarding the Bible's influence on law...
- Regarding the Bible's influence on literary thought...
- Regarding the Bible's influence on lives...

External Witness #8. The Bible's Unique Influence On Me

"Other books were given for our information; the Bible was given for our transformation."

IV. My Summation and Closing Argument

res ipsa loquitur = "The thing speaks for itself."

- God spoke...
- God spoke through men...
- God spoke through men that which is profitable and reliable!
- God has preserved the Bible.
- God has called men to translate it into our own language.
- God has provided born-again believers with an Indwelling Holy Spirit who enables us to read the Bible with comprehension (cf. 1 Corinthians 1-2)

"The Bible is either true or false; it is either the Word of God or the work of man, one or the other. If the Bible is the work of man, then it is not the Word of God; and if the Bible is just the work of man, it is the greatest imposter this world has ever known. From its first page to its last, the Bible claims to be the revealed will of God; if it can be convicted of being a lie, it

not only must come down from its high place to the level of man-made books, but it will sink lower than that. if it can be convicted of being an imposter, it never can survive the odium which that conviction will place upon it. But, if it is true, then there is no other book to be mentioned in comparison with it. If it is true, then no guesses of any man can be substituted for the Word of God.” (William Jennings Bryan as quoted by C.E. Colton in “Questions Christians Ask”)

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