

The Bible and the Christian Academic

Although the Bible is the most influential book and most published book in the world, it is rarely referred to in higher education. What has been its impact in academia? How can Christian academicians utilize the Bible in their various disciplines as well as in their personal lives and witness? How can we promote its message and relevance in the secular academy? Why should every Christian academic think biblically?

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I. Introduction

When we speak of the Bible, we are talking about the most influential, translated, published, widely-distributed, quoted, commented-on book in history.

It is also the most opposed, banned, burned, criticized, vilified, censored, and forbidden book in history.

The fact that both of the above paragraphs are true speaks of the Bible as history's most vital, dynamic, impactful and world-changing book. And it is in academia – the world of thought and idea – where this truth is most evident. Hopefully, as we consider this claim, it will encourage us all to renew our commitment to the relevance and power of the Bible for our world, our work, and our lives.

II. The Nature of the Bible

A. A dual-natured book – both:

1. Human
2. Divine

B. Humanly, it reflects the styles, vocabulary and experiences of its human authors.

1. It speaks of a real world and history

2. It speaks of human engagement with God in real-world terms; translatable and understandable to others
- C. Divine nature – it has God the Holy Spirit inspiring the thoughts and words of its human authors. This is what is called inspiration which in turn produces an inerrant and authoritative text.
1. Defining inspiration
 2. Defining inerrancy
 3. Defining authority
- D. The Bible is, therefore, both uniquely testable and verifiable by history, language, archaeology, prophesy and science.
- III. It is the authority of scripture therefore which has created a life changing and world changing dynamic. This can be seen in various disciplines. In fact, it could be claimed there are very few if any disciplines the Bible has not dynamically influenced
- A. Education
 - B. Medicine and health care
 - C. Science
 - D. Human Rights
 - E. Benevolence
 - F. Music
 - G. The Arts
 - H. Literature
- IV. It is largely, if not exclusively, that the Bible has transformed the lives and thought of individuals who then have transformed the world. Some examples:
- A. Early church fathers
 - B. Augustine
 - C. Johannes Gutenberg
 - D. Pascal

- E. Martin Luther
 - F. Isaac Newton – plus numerous scientists
 - G. William Carey and missionary cohorts
 - H. Rober Raikes
 - I. William Wilberforce
 - J. Martin Luther King Jr.
 - K. Charles Collin
 - L. Numerous others
- V. What about us?
- A. It's converting influence
 - B. It's guiding, correcting and encouraging influence
 - C. Its impact
 - i. on our/your academic discipline
 - ii. on your personal/professional life
 - iii. on our nations, culture, and world
 - D. What is your role?

Suggested Readings:

Books on the Bible's influence:

James Kennedy - "What If Jesus Had Never Been Born

Vishal Mangawaldi - "This Book Changed Everything "

"The Book That Made Your World"

"The Legacy of William Carey"

Alvin Schmidt - "How Christianity Changed the World"

Rodney Stark - "The Triumph of Christianity"

"The Victory of Reason"

Sources and Books on Biblical Reliability:

Craig Bloomberg - "the Historical Reliability of the New Testament"

John Feinberg - "Light in a Dark Place"

Carl F H Henry - "God Revelation and Authority" 6 volumes

Lee Strobel - "the Case for Christ"

"The Case for the Real Jesus"

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics