

Come and See Weekend – Why Believe in the Bible? Part 4

Speaker: Dr. Henry Schorr

Witnesses that testify to the validity of the Bible are:

the testimony of (1) **Jesus**, (2) **time**, (3) **archaeology**, and (4) **the prophets**.

(5) The testimony of **Biblical inspiration and infallibility** has faced four **false accusations**:

- (a) Only parts of the Bible are true. **Answer:** The whole Bible originated in the mind of God not in the mind of man. **“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”** (2 Peter 1:21). **“All Scripture** is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16). Biblical inspiration means that God so superintended the writers of Scripture that they wrote what God wanted them to write and were kept from error in doing so.
- (b) The writers of the NT just made it up. **Answer:** The Apostle Peter wrote: **“For we did not follow cleverly devised stories ..., but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty”** (2 Peter 1:16). The Apostle John stated much the same. **“That which ... we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched THIS we proclaim concerning the Word of Life”** (1 John 1:1).
- (c) The Bible was written too long after the events actually happened to be reliable, and over time myths were added to the historical account. **Answer:** The Apostle Paul’s letters were written just 15-25 years after Christ’s death. First Corinthians was written while more than 500 believers who had seen Jesus after His resurrection were still living (1 Corinthians 15:6). Formal creeds were formulated within months of Jesus’ death.
- (d) The Bible contains blatant contradictions. **Answer:** Leaving out information does not constitute a contradiction. Supposed errors have been refuted over time by archaeological discoveries.

(6) The testimony of **manuscript reliability**. The Bible is the most trustworthy document from all of antiquity. OT Scribes who copied the Bible went to great lengths to ensure each manuscript was accurate. The Dead Sea scrolls discovered in 1947 had very few variations from the Masoretic Text of 900 AD. Most of those were differences in spelling. NONE had ANY BEARING on the essential meaning of the Scripture passage.

The Bible is the best-preserved document of the ancient world. There are over 10,000 partial or complete manuscripts of the OT and over 24,000 ancient manuscripts of the NT Scriptures compared to only 7 existing handwritten copies of Plato and only 49 copies of Aristotle’s writings. The early church fathers quoted so often from the NT that even if we didn’t have any ancient copies of the NT it would be possible to reconstruct almost the entire NT from their writings alone.

These six compelling reasons are like the cords of a rope. TOGETHER they make a very compelling argument for the Bible’s validity.

(7) The **testimony of changed lives**. God has used the Scriptures to bring positive transformation to the lives of multiple millions of people.

People will say the Bible isn’t true and that those who follow it are being deceived. But real deception says there is no such thing as sin and tells you to put yourself at the center of the universe.

You can build your life on the shifting sands of today’s me-centered philosophies or you can build your life on Jesus—the rock upon which you can stand, a fortress that cannot be shaken.

sermon study guide

IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Play a game of 'Gossip' with your group using a verse from a paraphrase such as The Message. How did it go?
2. How do you decide something is true or false from something you have heard or read?

UP – PURSUE GOD

3. Read 1 Cor 15:3-8, 1 John 1:1, 2 Peter 1:16, and Acts 2:32. Why were eyewitnesses of Jesus' death and resurrection considered credible? In a day with no Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, Books, or Radio, how would all these sightings of Jesus encourage you?
4. Read 2 Peter 1:16-21, 2 Timothy 2:25, 3:16 and John 17:17. What do these verses tell us about the Bible, its trustworthiness, and how it may be used?

OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. Discuss which of the testimonies of the truth of Scripture in this series have impacted you the most? Why?
6. When you give your personal story of a changed life through Jesus, what parts of the Bible's truth have been the most influential in your testimony? How is the Bible daily changing your life?
7. What would you say to someone who argues that the Bible has been altered and that it doesn't mention chocolate enough? What Scriptures would you use?

For Personal Reflection / Prayer:

A challenge was made that asked, "What if we picked up our Bible as much as we picked up our smartphone?" Consider taking up the challenge that before you look at your phone each day you first read a portion of the Bible, even if it is just one verse.

THE WORD (NIV)

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

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.

Acts 2:32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.

2 Peter 1:16-21 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." ¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

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.

2 Timothy 2:25 Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

This week's writers: Elsa Henderson, Mark Eckstein, Gene and Karen Gibbs