

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD?

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Apologetics – Week 5

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Many Christians are fair-weather friends. They love God and go to church when life is good, but when life goes south they doubt God's goodness, greatness, and very existence. They walk away from God never to return. "How could God allow this?"
2. Many kids grow up in church and hear the Bible taught countless times, but when they watch an atheist video on TikTok or encounter an atheist biology professor who criticizes the Bible, they abandon the faith.
3. Many Christians go to church every Sunday, but after they receive a visit from a Jehovah's Witness or a Mormon, they abandon orthodox Biblical Christianity and join a cult.
4. Why do so many Christians abandon the faith? Because while they know what they believe, they don't know why. It's important to know what you believe, but it is just as important to know why. You need to know why you believe in God, in Jesus, in the Bible, in the Trinity, in creation, in heaven and hell. Otherwise, when you are challenged by skeptics or the hardships of life, your faith will crumble.
5. Not only do you need to know why you believe so that you don't fall away, but you also need to know why you believe so that you can be a witness. The Bible says you need to always be ready to give a defense for the reason that you believe (1 Pt 3:15). The Greek word for "defense" is apologia. It has nothing to do with saying you're sorry or apologizing for doing wrong. It literally means a defense of the Christian faith. Apologetics is defending the Christian faith when people ask you why you believe.
6. Today we are going to talk about why we believe that the Bible is God's word.
7. Christians are a people of the book. We read the Bible, study it, memorize it, obey it, and teach it to our children. Why do we place such value on the Bible? Because we believe it is God's word.

8. Many of you wake up thirty minutes early every day so you can spend time reading the Bible. Why? Because you believe it is God's word. Some of the kids in our church are in Bible Drill, memorizing the Bible. My kids are required to spend twenty minutes a day memorizing scripture for Bible Drill. Why? Because we believe the Bible is God's word.
9. Christians believe that God created the heavens and the earth, and the people are made in the image of God, even though this contradicts what contemporary scientists believe. Why? Because that's what the Bible teaches, and we believe the Bible is the word of God.
10. Christians believe that marriage is the union one man and one woman for a lifetime, that there are only two genders, that you should save sex for marriage – all beliefs that are highly controversial and very unpopular in some influential circles. Why? Because this is what the Bible teaches, and we believe that the Bible is God's word.
11. Not everyone believes the Bible is God's word.
 - i. **Bill Maher** "I don't believe God is a single parent who writes books. I think that the people who think God wrote a book called 'The Bible' are just childish."
 - ii. Many people believe that the Bible is just a bunch of fair tales. That it is a man-made book, that it is full of errors and contradictions, and that it has been changed over time. In short, they believe that it is not God's word, and it can't be trusted.
12. Why do Christians believe the Bible is God's word?

II. **SIX REASONS TO BELIEVE THE BIBLE**

1. The Bible claims to be God's word.
 - i. If the Bible didn't claim to be God's word, we would have no reason to believe it. But it does, over and over again.
 - ii. It refers to itself as "the word of God" 394 times in the Old Testament.
 - iii. **2 Timothy 3:16** "All Scripture is inspired by God"
 - iv. The word "inspired" means that God is the author of the Bible. He didn't physically write with pen and paper, but He used men to record His words. The word "all" means that every single word in the Bible, from beginning to end, is inspired by God.

- v. 2 Tim 3:16 is specifically talking about the Old Testament, but Jesus said that His disciples would go on to add to Scripture (Jn 16:13), and the New Testament writers understood that their writings were inspired Scripture (1 Cor 14:37; 1 Tim 5:18; 2 Pt 3:16).
- vi. So Christians believe the Bible is the word of God first because this is what the Bible claims. It doesn't claim to just be a historical book, but the very words of God.
- vii. By the way, what else does the Bible claim about itself? The Bible makes seven important claims about itself that Christians believe?
 - 1. Inspiration.
 - a. Every word in the Bible was authored by God.
 - b. **2 Timothy 3:16** "All Scripture is inspired by God"
 - 2. Inerrancy.
 - a. The Bible is truth, without any mixture of error.
 - b. **Psalm 19:7** "The instruction of the Lord is perfect, renewing one's life; the testimony of the Lord is trustworthy, making the inexperienced wise."
 - c. This logically flows from the first point, because if the Bible is God's word, and God does not lie or make mistakes, then every word in the Bible is true.
 - 3. Complete.
 - a. After the completion of the New Testament by eye witnesses of Jesus, the canon of Scripture was closed. We are not still adding to Scripture today. If someone came along and said God spoke to them and gave them another book to add to the Bible, we would reject them.
 - b. **Revelation 22:18-19** 18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. 19 And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share of the tree of

life and the holy city, which are written about in this book.

4. Authoritative.

a. If the Bible is God's word, then it is authoritative. It is not merely a book of historical facts, pithy sayings, or helpful advice. It is filled with commands that must be obeyed.

b. **James 1:22** But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

5. Sufficient.

a. The bible is all you need to know about God. Books and sermons about God are helpful only inasmuch as they align with and explain Scripture. You don't need any other revelations from God.

b. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** 16 All Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

6. Effective.

a. The Bible, if you will believe it and apply it to your life, will transform and improve your life.

b. **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

7. Determinative.

a. The Bible says that those who believe and obey the Bible are true Christians, but those who don't are not.

b. **John 8:47** The one who is from God listens to God's words. This is why you don't listen, because you are not from God."

2. The Bible is historically accurate.

- i. The Bible is full of historical information. This is important, because that means it is testable. We can compare it to other historical documents and archeological discoveries and test its accuracy. If the Bible isn't accurate in what it says about history, then we can't trust what it says about spiritual things.
- ii. About two hundred years ago, many historians claimed the bible was not true because the Bible mentioned many historical events, people, and places which were not found in other historical records. So, God invented a new kind of science – archeology – in the 1800s. When the field of archeology first began, many archeologists set out to disprove the Bible. They were more than surprised to find the opposite. The deeper they dug, the more that archeology confirmed the Bible.
- iii. One such man was William Ramsay, an atheist and one of the world's greatest archeologists. He gave his whole life to archeology, and decided that he would disprove the Bible. He focused on the book of Acts in the New Testament. After twenty-five years of study, he declared that Acts was exactly accurate, even down to the most minute details. In one of his books he shocked the academic world by declaring himself a Christian.
- iv. One example are the Hittites, a people group mentioned in the Bible. Since the Hittites were not mentioned in other historical works, historians concluded the bible must be wrong. But in 1906 archeologists were digging and they found forty Hittite cities, along with a great number of monuments describing their activities.
- v. Since the beginning of archeology, over 25,000 sites have been discovered that pertain to the Bible, and the more they uncover, the more they prove the Bible to be true.
- vi. Leading archeologists have confirmed the historical and geographical accuracy of the Bible.
- vii. **Steven Ortiz**, Director of the Center for Archaeology at Lipscomb University "Serious scholars, even if they're not believers, even if they do not think this is a sacred text, still consider it to be history, because things match up so well. There isn't anything to

contradict or anything to make me wary of the testimony of Scripture.”

- viii. **Millar Burrows**, Yale archeologist “On the whole, archeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the scriptural record. More than one archeologist has found his respect for the Bible increased by experience of excavation of Palestine.”

3. The Bible has been carefully preserved throughout history.

- i. Some people say that the Bible cannot be trusted because it has been changed over the centuries so that what we have today is not even close to the originals. But that’s not true. We have many ancient manuscripts of the Bible that show that the Bible we have today has not be changed.
- ii. For example, today many college students read the works of Plato, the Greek philosopher. How do we know that the copies of his writings that we have today are what he actually wrote? How do we know that they weren’t altered? First, we would need to find old copies of his works – the older the better. Second, the more of these manuscripts we have, the better. When it comes to Plato, we only have seven ancient copies, and the oldest was made 1,200 years after the original. Yet, nobody doubts that authenticity of the works of Plato that we read today.
- iii. What about the Bible? Let’s start with the New Testament. We have 24,000 ancient copies of the New Testament, and several of them date back to only 50-100 years after the originals. In fact, we have an entire New Testament manuscript that goes back to 300 years after the original was written. Scholars have taken the New Testament that we read today and have compared it to the ancient manuscripts, and the New Testament has not been changed. The New Testament is far more trustworthy than the works of Plato.
- iv. Now let’s talk about the Old Testament. In 1947 archeologists made the greatest archeological discovery in history – The Dead Sea Scrolls. In caves near the Dead Sea in Israel, they found many ancient manuscripts of the Old Testament, some as old as 450 BC.

Why is that significant? At the time, the oldest manuscripts that we had were much later. But when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, they were able to compare those ancient manuscripts to the Old Testament we have today, and they have found that the Biblical text has not been altered at all.

4. The Bible is internally consistent.

- i. The Bible claims to have many writers but only one author. If this is true, and if the author is God, then God would not contradict Himself. Therefore, if the Bible is truly God's word, then it would be internally consistent. It would not contradict itself. And that's exactly what we find.
- ii. Think about it like this. If after today's sermon I would interview everyone here and ask you what the sermon was about, I'd get forty different answers.
- iii. But the Bible was written over a period of 1,800 years, by over forty writers, on three different continents. These writers were from very different backgrounds. Moses was a prince who became a shepherd. David was a shepherd who became a king. Isaiah and Jeremiah were prophets. Ezra was a priest, Nehemiah was the king's cup-bearer, Daniel was a politician, Matthew was a tax collector, Luke was a medical doctor, Paul was a Jewish Pharisee, and Peter was a fisherman. Yet when we compare their writings, they are consistent. They all agree. There are no contradictions in the Bible.
- iv. Theologian **R.C. Sproul** "Its consistency over centuries and through the pens of multiple authors is nothing less than astonishing."
- v. **Nathan Busentiz** "The Bible presents a unified picture of God, mankind, sin, salvation, and every area of doctrine." *Reasons We Believe*

5. The Bible is replete with fulfilled prophecy.

- i. The Bible is full of predictive prophecy – more so than any other religious text. If the Bible is truly God's word, then these prophecies would come true. If the prophecies don't come true, then it would reveal not only that the Bible can't be trusted, but

that it obviously wasn't inspired by a God who knows the future. So what do we find in the Bible?

- ii. First, it is important to point out that the bible is a book of prophecy. A staggering 27 percent of the Bible deals with predictions about the future.
- iii. According to J. Barton Payne, author of the *Encyclopedia of Bible Prophecy*, 8,352 of the bible's 31,124 verses are predictive. When duplicates are removed, there are 1,817 predictions in the Bible, far more than any other religious text. The apostle Peter referred to the Bible as "the prophetic word" (2 Pt 1:19).
- iv. Second, in the Bible we find countless of miraculous examples of fulfilled prophecy.
- v. For example, the prophet Ezekiel predicted that the city of Tyre would be destroyed (Ez 26:1-21). Years later that came true in two stages – by Nebuchadnezzar (in 585-573), and then later by Alexander the Great (in 322 BC). He predicted that it would never be rebuilt. Still today the city lies in ruins.
- vi. Around 910 the prophets predicted the fall and captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel (1 Ki 14:15-16). This came to pass 180 years later in 722 BC.
- vii. The fall and captivity of the southern kingdom of Judah was predicted in Is 39:5-7, and some 150 years later it happened.
- viii. The prophet Jeremiah predicted the length of Israel's captivity – 70 years (Jer 29:10) – and this was precisely fulfilled.
- ix. Or consider the prophecy about Cyrus, the emperor of Persia. 150 years before he was born, the prophet Isaiah mentioned him by name (Is 44:28; 45:1), and predicted that he would become the ruler of Persia and that he would allow Israel to go back to their land. Later historians say that Cyrus read this prophecy and was so moved that he carried it out.
- x. We don't have time to get into the Messianic prophecies. The OT contains more than 300 prophecies about the coming Messiah that were all fulfilled in Christ.
- xi. Jeane Dixon was probably the most popular prophet in the 20th century. She made predictions in three consecutive presidential

elections, in 52, 56, and 60. She predicted each parties major candidate as well as who would win each election. She got 0% right. She was completely wrong. And you know millions of people believe in Jeane Dixon to be a true prophet, someone to be trusted. That's crazy!

- xii. In the 1980 the National Enquirer magazine contained the predictions of the ten leading seers and prophets in the world today for the events that were supposed to take place by the end of that year. There were 61 prophecies. You know how many were fulfilled? None.
- xiii. And in the writings of Buddha, Confucius, and Lao-Tse, you will not find a single example of predicted prophecy. Not one.
- xiv. But the Bible has thousands of predictive prophecies that have already been fulfilled.

6. Jesus believed the Bible was God's word.

- i. The most authoritative reason to believe that the Bible is God's word is the testimony of Jesus. Jesus claimed to be God and then proved it by predicting His own death and resurrection. If He says the Bible is true, then that's enough reason to believe it. In other words, who are you going to believe – your college history professor, or a guy who predicted His own resurrection and then followed through on His promise?
- ii. Theologian **John Stott** "The chief reason why the Christian believes in the divine origin of the Bible is that Jesus Christ himself taught it."
- iii. What did Jesus say about the bible?
 1. Jesus called the Old Testament the "word of God," which "cannot be broken." Jn 10:35
 2. He said that He came to fulfill the Old Testament, and that not one part of the Old Testament would pass away until all things are accomplished. Mt 5:18
 3. When He condemned the Pharisees, it was because they were departing from the Bible. They putting their traditions in place of Scripture. Mk 7:13

4. When He taught, He would base His teachings on the Bible. He would often start by saying, "It is written." Mt 21:13; Mt 26:31; Mk 7:6; Mk 14:21
 5. He said that the Old Testament pointed to His coming. Lk 24:27; Jn 5:39
- iv. **J. Hampton Keathley III** "In fact, the greatest testimony to the authenticity of the Bible as God's inspired and inerrant Word is the Lord Jesus. Why is His testimony so important? Because God authenticated and proved Him to be His own divine Son by the resurrection. Christ not only clearly confirmed the authority of the Old Testament, but He specifically promised the New Testament."

III. CONCLUSION

1. Christians believe the Bible is the word of God. It's inspired, inerrant, complete, authoritative, sufficient, and determinative.
2. Why do we believe in the Bible? Not because our parents told us to. Not because the church told us to. Not even because the Bible says it is God's word. We believe the Bible God's word because the evidence proves it is His word.
3. But there's one more reason to believe in the Bible. If it is the word of God, then it would be life-changing. And that's what it does. It changes the lives of those who believe it. Josh McDowell is a Christian author and speaker on apologetics. He writes about how his alcoholic father was dramatically changed by the gospel.
 - i. "It was like someone reached down and switched on a light inside him. He touched alcohol only once after that. He got the drink only as far as his lips and that was it – after forty years of drinking! He didn't need it anymore. Fourteen months later, he died from complications of his alcoholism. But in that fourteen-month period over a hundred people in the area around my tiny hometown committed their lives to Jesus Christ because of the change they saw in the town drunk, my dad."
4. I believe the Bible is God's word. I believe it is true, every word of it.