

Come and See Weekend – Why Believe in the Bible?

Speaker: Dr. Henry Schorr

The supreme reason Christians believe the Bible is reliable and trustworthy is because JESUS, our Lord God and King, confirmed the trustworthiness and reliability of the Scriptures as being the very Word of God. He had no tolerance for anyone either adding to them or taking anything away from them. If Jesus is just a man, then His Word carries no more authority than any other person. But if Jesus is God (as He claimed to be and as His resurrection PROVES Him to be) then you know that His Words are true and trustworthy.

Christians believe all **39 books of the Old Testament** are God's Word because Jesus viewed them—the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms—as inspired and authorized by God. For several centuries before Christ the Jews revered and followed the same 39 books we have today.

Jesus said He didn't come to change the OT or to discredit it in any way. He came to explain God's original intention behind the OT teachings AND to fulfill or complete the OT prophecies through His own life, death and resurrection. Jesus quoted the OT Scriptures regularly, made reference to a number of the patriarchs and prophets in the OT, and consistently communicated total respect for the OT Scriptures as being authoritative and reliable. So did His apostles. The NT writers quoted from nearly ALL 39 books of the OT. Jesus and His chosen apostles saw the OT as God's Word and as complete.

Jesus reprimanded the Pharisees for adding their traditions and legalistic practices to the OT and attempting to make them equal to the Scriptures.

The Apocryphal books were written somewhere between the third and first century before Christ, but they didn't claim to be the Word of God or to be written by prophets of God. They were never quoted by Jesus or even one of the writers of the NT, nor were they recognized as being authoritative Scripture by the Jews or early Christians.

What about the NT? Obviously, New Testament books had to be historically accurate and theologically consistent with the overall message of the Scriptures.

Jesus deliberately made provision for the writing of the NT by appointing, empowering and authorizing a special group of His disciples, whom He named apostles, to do so in the same way God the Father appointed prophets to write the OT Scriptures.

The early church used two major TESTS to determine whether a NT BOOK was recognized as inspired and authorized by God.

1. Was it **written by an apostle or a close associate of an apostle**?
 - a. They were all personally chosen, commissioned as apostles and authorized by Jesus. Besides some disciples, Jesus also chose and appointed his half brother James and Paul, formerly called Saul.
 - b. They all personally experienced Jesus and His resurrection. Paul had a personal encounter with the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus. The other apostles affirmed Paul's apostleship.
 - c. They were given special inspiration by God the Holy Spirit to remember what Jesus taught and to write the NT Scriptures.
2. Was it **recognized** as inspired and authoritative **by the early churches**?

The books of the Bible were ALREADY INSPIRED by God. All the early church councils did was to acknowledge and affirm the books that were already believed to be inspired by God.

If Jesus viewed the Bible as God's Word as trustworthy and reliable, then if He is truly our Lord God and King, how can we possibly have a lower view of the Scriptures than He did?

sermon study guide

IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. At what age did you start reading the Bible?
2. Do you believe the Bible from Genesis 1 on is true and factual or a series of myths and coincidences? Why?

UP – PURSUE GOD

3. How did Jesus and the New Testament writers establish that the Old Testament is true?

Read Acts 1:21-26; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 2:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

4. How did the early church determine what texts should be included in the New Testament? What qualified someone to be an apostle?

OUT – PURSUE MISSION

Read Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:5-6; Revelation 22:18.

5. Why is it important that we do not add to or remove from the text of the Bible?
6. If you believe the Bible is true and factual, are you willing to stand up against those who disagree and how? What might be the consequence of doing so?

For Personal Reflection / Prayer:

How is the Bible a part of your daily devotion to God? How has the Bible been helpful to you in knowing Jesus?

If you have not read the Bible before, consider reading the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. See how Jesus lived His life in devotion to God the Father, leading and teaching his disciples how to live and how to love others.

THE WORD (NIV)

Acts 1:21-26

²¹ Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, ²² beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."

²³ So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs." ²⁶ Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

1 Corinthians 9:1

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord?

1 Corinthians 2:4

My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power,

1 Thessalonians 2:13

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

Deuteronomy 4:2

Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.

Proverbs 30:5-6

⁵ "Every word of God is flawless;

he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

⁶ Do not add to his words,

or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Revelation 22:18

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll.

This week's writers: Elsa Henderson, David McMillin and Jorel Quemuel