

Tough Questions
Why Can We Trust the Bible?
Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, March 10, 2019

I. The Bible Claims to Be the Word of God

2 Peter 1:21 “For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Over 2,000 times in the Old Testament the assertion is made that God Himself spoke what is written in the pages of the Old Testament and that theme continues on into the New Testament where the phrase ‘the word of God’ occurs more than 40 times.

Psalms 119:89 “Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.”

Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.”

II. The Bible Has Incredible Unity and Consistency

This is astounding when you consider that the Bible is actually a library of 66 books, written over a period of 1,500 years, by 40 different authors who lived on three different continents, including 16 different countries, and it was written in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

Their writings cover hundreds of controversial subjects so that the unity of the Bible cannot be explained by some kind of coincidence or collusion.

III. The Bible Has a Careful and Accurate Transmission

A. Consider the Number of Early Manuscripts that Still Exist Today

The New Testament has far more early manuscript evidence than any other ancient work. There are more than 24,000 early copies of the New Testament with only a 25-year time span between the original and the earliest manuscript copies.

B. Understand the Process by Which Scribes Made Copies of the Bible

Making copies of the Bible was an amazing and pain-staking process. After the scribes copied a book word for word, they would then check it to see if the middle letter of the middle word of that book matched the original. If it didn't they would destroy the entire copy and start over.

C. Consider the Number of Eye Witnesses that Existed as the Bible Began to Be Circulated

The writings of the New Testament began to circulate only 30-45 years after Jesus's death, which means there were eyewitnesses who were still alive as the New Testament began to circulate and would have spoken up to discredit the claims if they were not true.

IV. The Bible is a Reliable History of Our World

Luke's intentions are very clear. He wasn't writing to entertain, but to convince us that these things really happened. See **Luke 1:1-4**.

Luke 3:1-2 "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness."

In just two verses, Luke packs in 21 references to historical people, places and circumstances – all of which could have been proven false, but Luke goes into detail because he's writing history.

V. The Bible Has Hundreds of Fulfilled Prophecies

A. The book of Daniel

It's been estimated that there are 135 prophecies in **Daniel 11:1-35** that have all been literally fulfilled!

B. Cyrus – The Bible predicts the future ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire

Through the prophet, Isaiah, God described how He would destroy the powerful kingdom of Babylon, through the hands of the Medes and Persians, led by Cyrus. The prophecy was made 150 years before Cyrus was ever born!

Isaiah 45:1-2 "Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: "I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron"

Isaiah also predicted that Cyrus would serve as God's 'shepherd' that would release the Jews from captivity and send them back to their land for the purpose of rebuilding the temple. See **Isaiah 44:28**.

C. Tyre – The Bible predicts the precise destruction of this great city

In **Ezekiel 26:1-14**, the prophet Ezekiel looked 1,900 years into the future and predicted that the city of Tyre would be a bald rock where fisherman gathered to spread out their nets. History records that's exactly what happened.

D. Jesus – The Bible predicts in great detail His life

There are over 100 prophecies in the Old Testament about Jesus's birth, ministry, teachings and death.

If you read **Isaiah 53** you'll see that this whole chapter is an amazing prophecy about the suffering Jesus would experience in His death on the cross, but it was written more than 700 years before His death.

Since the Bible first rolled off the Guttenberg press in 1450 AD, it's been the #1 best-selling book every year selling between 30 and 60 million copies worldwide.

The Bible has such appeal across every culture because it's not a random collection of stories, but it's God's Word about God's Son who came to solve our biggest problem – the sin problem that separates us from a Holy God.