

The Harvest is Plentiful – Is the Bible Reliable & Trustworthy?

If I were to ask a group of random people, “What do you believe about the Bible?” What do you think some of the common responses would be?

- It is a religious book that advocates for certain beliefs & practices!
- It is a collection of books written by various people about the God they worship and serve!
- It is a book of ancient stories that promotes a certain moral code!

If I were to ask a group of Christians, “What do you believe about the Bible?” What kind of different responses would I get? What responses should I get?

- It is the source of truth for everything pertaining to faith & life!
- It is the very Word of God! God’s own words spoken to us!
- It is not just a history book, it is His-story book... for all of time!

So, what do you believe about the Bible?

The way we answer this question will determine the place it has in our lives?

- It will either be a source of advice, that we occasionally turn to, or it will be the voice of truth for all our inquiries!
- It will either be one voice among many perspectives, or the standard by which all other perspectives are judged!
- It will either have the first & final say, or we ourselves will!

So again, I will ask, what place does the Bible have in your/my life?

And does how we utilize it, on a daily basis, actually back up our answer?

If the Bible is going to have the highest elevated presence in our lives (Sola Scriptura), how important is it that it is reliable & trustworthy?

So, here’s the big faith question today... “Is the Bible reliable & trustworthy?”

Answer: “Yes and Amen!” How can we be sure?

- 1) Because it is God’s Word! **2 Timothy 3:16**
 - This statement alone invites the highest level of scrutiny!
- 2) Because the Spirit of God confirms its truth in us!
 - This invites the highest level of personal scrutiny, before embracing it!
- 3) Because it is the source of change in our lives! **Isaiah 55:10-11**
 - The Bible is not a “how to” guide for change, it is the very source of it!

Romans 12:2 – “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...”

John 17:17 – “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.”

Psalm 19:7-8 – “The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes...”

James 1:21 – “...receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

Hebrews 4:12 – “For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit...”

But some will say these are over-spiritualized & self-authenticated responses...

What if we tried to take God out of the equation and just tested the Bible’s credibility in the same way we test all other books of antiquity for authenticity?

- 4) Because the Bible is historically accurate!
 - As far as we are able to determine - the names, places, and events in the Bible are recorded accurately!
 - “The testimony of the historical evidence is that the Bible can be trusted as an accurate record.”
- 5) Because the Bible is internally consistent!
 - The continuity of the Bible is unmatched... Read Josh McDowell
- 6) Because the Bible is textually solid!
 - All documents of antiquity are given a bibliographical test – If the original documents are not preserved. To determine the reliability of the copies we have, we look at the number of existing manuscripts & the time interval between the original & the existing copies.

The Bible is far and away more reliable than any other ancient document that exists! For more read Josh McDowell’s “A Ready Defense”

- The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls was an amazing testament to the accuracy and credibility of the Bible we hold in our hands today!

The Bible passes all the tests of reliability... It can be trusted... the only thing that remains in question is “What are we going to do with this book?”

Maybe we need to move past the questions of the reliability and trustability of the Bible, & move on to “What is this book intended to be/do in my life?”

1 Thessalonians 2:13 – “We thank God constantly, for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God, which is at work in you believers.”

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