

## CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

### The Inspiration of Scriptures

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct.

- 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13
- 2 Peter 1:21

#### A. The Revelation of God to Humanity

1. God took the initiative to reveal himself to his creation.
  - How, when, and what He reveals is exclusively determined by God.
2. God revelation is always consistent with itself.
3. God uses general revelation and special revelation to make himself known.
4. The ultimate goal of divine revelation is that people would come to know God in a real and personal way.

#### B. How We Got the Scriptures

1. God's self-revelation includes a large chain of revelatory events: God's original acts and words, the written recording of these acts/words by inspired writers, the process of canonization, and the illumination by the Holy Spirit of readers.

2. The word scriptures means “holy writings.”
  - The original writings are called autographs
  - The copies of the autographs are called manuscripts
  - Small differences between manuscripts are called variants
3. Inspiration is defined as the special act of the Holy Spirit by which he led the writers of Scripture to write the message that God gave them.
4. The cannon of Scripture refers to books that have met a standard and that the church has accepted as the inspired Word of God.
5. The four canonical tests were:
  - Book was written by an \_\_\_\_\_ apostle \_\_\_\_\_ or someone close to an apostle
  - Book matched teaching of existing \_\_\_\_\_ scripture \_\_\_\_\_
  - Book was widely accepted by the \_\_\_\_\_ church \_\_\_\_\_
  - Book had a quality that revealed divine \_\_\_\_\_ inspiration \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. changed lives)

### C. Reasons We Believe the Scriptures are Inspired

Although we cannot prove the Scriptures since our belief that they are God’s word is an act of faith, we do have good reasons to believe they are the inspired Word of God, such as:

1. Claims from \_\_\_\_\_ Old \_\_\_\_\_ Testament \_\_\_\_\_ authors
2. Testimony of \_\_\_\_\_ fulfilled \_\_\_\_\_ prophecy
3. Testimony of the \_\_\_\_\_ Bible’s \_\_\_\_\_ unity
  - The Bible was written over a period of about 1,600 years by 40 different human authors.

4. Testimony from \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus \_\_\_\_\_
5. Belief of the \_\_\_\_\_ Apostles \_\_\_\_\_
6. Historical and archeological \_\_\_\_\_ evidence \_\_\_\_\_
7. Confirmation of \_\_\_\_\_ changed \_\_\_\_\_ lives

#### D. Applications of the Truth that the Scriptures are Inspired

- Understanding the Inspired Word of God requires the illumination of the Holy Spirit.
- Because we believe Scripture is Inspired, we believe it is Infallible, incapable of failing, and inerrant, contains no errors—it is true in all it affirms.
- Four sources of authority in an individual's life are:
  - Human reason \_\_\_\_\_
  - Religion \_\_\_\_\_
  - Culture \_\_\_\_\_
  - Bible \_\_\_\_\_
- The Word of God must be the highest authority in a believer's life for both faith \_\_\_\_\_ and conduct \_\_\_\_\_.