

WHY I CAN BELIEVE—4 THE BIBLE Part 2

“Take a lesson from the fig tree. From the moment you notice its buds form, the merest hint of green, you know summer’s just around the corner. So it is with you: When you see all these things, you’ll know he’s at the door. Don’t take this lightly. I’m not just saying this for some future generation, but for all of you. This age continues until all these things take place. **Sky and earth will wear out; my words won’t wear out.** Matthew 24:32-35, The Message

LAST WEEK: The Bible is the Real Deal. Manuscript evidence supports its textual credibility, archeology supports its historical record, modern translations are accurate and culturally coherent.

What About the Content of the Bible Itself?

1. “Isn’t any meaning of the Bible lost in individual interpretation?”

Reality: Most of the Bible is straight-forward in its facts and directions.

But he’s already made it plain how to live, what to do, what GOD is looking for in men and women It’s quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don’t take yourself too seriously—take God seriously. (Micah 6:8 The Message)

2. “Don’t scientific facts undermine the truth claims of the Bible?”

Reality: Science is not theology and the Bible is first a literary tool to introduce people to God, not a scientific declaration.

If God is a possibility, then the suspension of physical laws, a miracle, is not an issue.

3. “Hasn’t modern society deemed the Bible irrelevant?”

Reality: The Bible has a positive reputation but few are reading it. Most Americans aren’t reading *any* books these days, [80% of U.S. families did not buy or read a book last year.]

Overall, Americans have a positive view of the Bible. Thirty-seven percent say it is helpful today, while a similar number call it life-changing (35 percent) or true (36 percent). Half (52 percent) say the Bible is a good source for morals. Few say the Bible is outdated (14 percent), harmful (7 percent) or bigoted (8 percent). [Lifeway Research]

Sources: Dr. James Emery White, two series he taught at Mecklenburg Church, Charlotte, NC. Timothy Keller, The Reason For God; Blogs.thegospelcoalition.org

Common Approaches to Dismiss the Moral Imperatives of the Bible

- “I get a personal exemption.”
- “The Bible is a spiritual buffet where I pick and choose my behavior.”
- “My cultural opinions override anything in the Bible”

There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Proverbs 16:25

All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the LORD weighs the motives.
Proverbs 16:2

Listen to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days.
Proverbs 19:20

Is the Bible inspired of God—Your Decision.

1. Jesus fully honored the Old Testament.

"I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law [of Moses] until everything is accomplished." (Matthew 5:18, NIV)

2. Early on the church honored the writings of the apostles as inspired of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. These became the “New Testament.”

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work. (II Timothy 3:16-17, NLT)

“The Spirit shows what is true and will come and guide you into the full truth...by taking my message and telling it to you.” (John 16:12, 14, CEV)

...[the early church] devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching.” (Acts 2:42, NIV)

3. Current events seem to affirm the veracity of the Bible’s predictions.

Empires have come and gone yet the Church remains and prophecies continue to be fulfilled, not the least of these is the establishment of Israel as a nation May 1, 1948. What a strange thing to happen, yet the Book of Daniel predicted this day would come.

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