

# Can We Trust the Bible?

*Part 1: Did Jesus & The Apostles Trust it?*  
(preached 4/16/23)

Please turn to 2 Timothy 3:14.

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 **All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,** 17 that the man of God may be **complete, equipped for every good work.**

The purpose of this new sermon series is one thing: ***to increase your confidence that the Bible is the Word of God*** and that, as Paul told Timothy, we can depend on it for:

- TEACHING. To know what is true and what isn't. To know God's character, what He wants from us, and what His plans are.
- REPROOF. To have a standing of truth to accurately warn someone when they're going down the wrong path.
- CORRECTION. To correct any false beliefs, perceptions, and opinions which don't line up with what God believes and perceives.
- TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS. Showing us what is good and what is evil, and training us to belief and do what is good.

## WARNING!

- There will be some inconvenient facts as we dive into the history of how the Bible came about. We'll get into that next week.
- There will be a lot of historical and cultural details that will explain many things we read in the Bible and greatly enhance our understanding of it.

TESTIMONY. For today, however, let me start out giving you my personal testimony.

LIKED ET VERSES. I got Saved in 1997 but had no interest in going to church. Even though Jesus was now my Savior, I still believed many things that clashed directly with what the Lord wrote in the Bible. I was happy to see there were lots of "End Times" things in the Scriptures and teachers like Jack Van Impe, Hal Lindsey, and Grant Jeffrey who liked teaching about it. I ate up what they taught, especially Jack Van Impe. I even ordered his special KJV Prophecy Bible where he labels and highlights every End Times verse from Genesis to Revelation.

## SHOW BIBLE

CONFLICT! I was in great conflict, though, because all 3 of these men took *2 Timothy 3:16* quite seriously. Van Impe had a weekly show that I watched religiously. His nickname was “Mr. Bible” and he claimed 50,000 hours of study into the same as well as memorizing more verses than just about anyone. He quoted *2 Timothy 3:16* more than any other verse!

PREACHED SOCIAL ISSUES TOO. What’s more is that my 3 favorite ET teachers didn’t just stick with said subject when they preached, they often spoke of familiar social issues like abortion, LGBT, and more. They always took a Biblical stance and quoted verses to back up what they said.

HYPOCRISY. NO DECODER RING! Hence my conflict. I would eat up the end time verses they quoted and taught on and receive it as absolute truth, but would reject any verses they quoted which clashed with my worldview. Other local Christians gave me pushback on this too, asking me how I discerned which verses were from God and which weren’t. My wife used to say “*do you have some secret decoder ring which tells the difference?*” I didn’t.

FINALLY SURRENDERED. As this conflict grew within me, I finally broke about 2 years later when the Holy Spirit asked me whether I truly believed the Bible was God’s word or not...and I said yes. It was a great relief to surrender to the Lord’s will vs. exalting my own.

**It truly began my journey of repentance—not just from sin, but from the ungodly world views I had back then.** This process is still ongoing!

**How are all of you doing on this, BTW?** Do you find that when you read the Bible or hear it quoted and taught from, that it still clashes with certain opinions you have? Every one of those conflicts are normal in the life of a Christian and represent opportunity for repentance. This is part of our being disciples of Jesus, ever being transformed by Him to become more like Him.

*Let me show you what began to convince me...and convict me that the Bible was truly God’s Word.*

## SHOW GRAPH

**Say this with me please: 66/40.** There are 66 books of the bible and 40 authors spanning millennia. Pause and think about that a moment and let me ask you some questions, especially those of you who are/were married:

- How often can you get two people to agree on anything?
- If you have 2 or more kids: are they more often in synch or in conflict?
- Now increase the number of people from 2 to a committee—how often do they all perfectly agree with each other?

DISAGREEMENT. It's impossible. The more you increase the number of people, the more disagreement there will be. Now let's take it one step further: suppose the large committee are born in radically different lifetimes, circumstances, and cultures. One person is born in 1500, another in 1650, a third in 1720, and the last in 1930...and all born in different countries.

- How hard would it be to get them all to write a research paper and perfectly agree with each other?
- For all their research papers to remain consistent and actually make references to each other?

Let's go one MORE step: Suppose a group of authors wrote 20 different research papers 500 years ago, and then another group of authors wrote more research papers here in the 2020's.

- Suppose that not only do the papers from 500 years ago agree with each other, but those in the 2020's do too.
- AND the 2020's papers reference the papers written 500 years, all in synch, despite the authors not knowing each other and having been born in different times and countries?
- In other words, the authors from hundreds of years ago accurately predicted—prophesied—things that would take place well after they died and said predictions CAME TRUE. We'll talk more about that next week.

Look at the graph on the screen: **there are nearly 64,000 cross references in the Bible from New to Old Testaments!**

CROSS REFERENCE ON THE PAGE. Pause and consider what this means and allow it to boggle your mind: 66 different books, written by 40 different men and women, across several thousand years. There's a good chance that the Bible you own makes these references for you. As you read through the NT for example, your Bible may have a column to the right where it shows you the OT reference. Thank God for good scholars who painstakingly did this, which shows the following:

**DESPITE HUMAN IMPERFECTIONS, GOD HAS SUPERNATURALLY PRESERVED HIS WORD.**

INCONVENIENT FACTS. In a future sermon I'm going to be sharing some very inconvenient facts which MIGHT seem to contradict what I just said. To the point where some of you may raise an eyebrow as I preach and wonder where I'm going with this.

But have no fear: **this sermon series will increase your confidence in the Bible and not confuse you!**

**For today look and remember this graph:**

- It's impossible for 66 different books to agree with each other over the span of millennia.
- It's impossible for 40 different men and women born in vastly different times, cultures, and circumstances to do the same.
- It's impossible for the ancient authors to accurately predict events to take place centuries in their future.

***Matthew 19:27 ESV***

26 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

**Both the writing and preservation of the Bible were a combination of God's supernatural providence and God-given human scholarship and commitment.**

**What did Jesus think of the Bible?** In His famous duel with Lucifer, look how Jesus chooses to fight:

***Luke 4:1-13***

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. 3 The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." 4 And Jesus answered him, "**It is written**, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.' " 5 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, 6 and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." 8 And Jesus answered him, "**It is written**, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.' " 9 And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, 10 for it is written, " 'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' 11 and " 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.' " 12 And Jesus answered him, "**It is said**, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.' " 13 And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

QUOTED BIBLE. The same man Who walked on water, resurrected the dead, and calmed both wind and sea with a wave of His hand chose not to use His supernatural powers to crush the devil underfoot. Instead He quoted the Bible.

ARE YOU MESSIAH? When challenged by the religious leaders of His day to His claims of being the Messiah and Son of God, Jesus quoted the Bible:

**Matthew 21:42**

42 Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “ ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

SADDUCEES. When challenged by Sadducees that there would be no resurrection from the dead, Jesus said:

**Matthew 22:29**

29 But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.”

PROPHESED HIM. When giving evidence that the OT Scriptures prophesied about Him, Jesus said:

**Luke 22:37**

37 For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.”

MORNING OF RESURRECTION. On the morning of His Resurrection, the disciples are hiding in a house with the doors locked. Mary Magdalene bursts in and claims she just saw and talked with him, but they don’t believe her. Jesus appears to them, even showing them His crucifixion holes and the one made with the Roman spear. He even eats a piece of fish in front of them to prove He’s flesh and not spirit! I shared these verses with you on Easter and talked about how—even then—the disciples were struggling to believe it was Jesus Risen. Then this happens:

**Luke 24:45**

45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

**Consider:** Jesus appearing out of thin air didn’t convince the disciples He was risen. Jesus showing them His crucifixion and spear wounds didn’t either, nor did His eating a little Long John Silver.

**It was only when He opened their minds to the Bible that they believed.**

Resurrected Jesus also appeared to 2 of His disciples walking along a road who 1) didn’t know who He was and 2) didn’t believe He’d risen from the dead. Look how Risen Jesus handled the situation:

***Luke 24:27***

27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Later on after Risen Jesus just VANISHES this is what the two disciples say to each other:

***Luke 24:32***

32 They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

PHARISEES. Look at how Jesus gets after the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees in John’s Gospel:

***John 5:39***

39 “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,”

VERSES PROPHESED HIM. Jesus was telling them that the OT verses prophesied His coming, what He would do, and Who He REALLY was—the Lord! The Savior! The Son of God!!!

RISEN AND JUDGES. When Jesus said that He would raise up all who believed in Him into divine bodies who would judge the world, the religious leaders had a cow! Here’s how He responded:

***John 10:35***

35 “If he called them gods [judges] to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—”

To back up this controversial statement, Jesus calls upon their own supposed confidence that the Bible is God’s Word and cannot be “broken” but is rather complete/perfect!

CROSS PROPHESED. When Jesus was hanging the Cross, the Gospel writers realized that all aspects of it fulfilled ancient OT prophecies showing Jesus to be the Messiah:

***John 19:24***

24 so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” So the soldiers did these things,

***Verse 28:***

The Death of Jesus 28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.”

**Verses 36-37:**

36 For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” 37 And again another Scripture says, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”

**John 20:9**

9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

JUDAS REPLACED. After the Death and Resurrection of Christ, the disciples replaced Judas with Matthias and they were wondering WHY Judas betrayed the Lord. Peter answers the question:

**Acts 1:16**

16 “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

PHILLIP. When preaching the Gospel to a eunuch, look how Phillip goes about it:

**Acts 8:35**

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

BEREANS. You may be aware of the famous Bereans who are compared to the Thessalonians as receiving the truth of the Gospel when Paul preached it, whereas the Thessalonians rejected it:

**Acts 17:11**

11 Now these Jews [the Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

KNEW TRUTH. The Bereans knew in their spirits that what Paul said was truth, but then confirmed it by going to their Bibles to confirm it.

ROMANS. Writing to the Roman Christians, Paul says this:

**Romans 15:4**

4 For whatever was written in former days [the OT Bible] was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

RESURRECTION. When speaking about the Resurrection of Jesus, Paul reminded the Corinthians:

**1 Corinthians 15:3-4**

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

PETER. I quote from the Apostle Peter who reassured his church that the Bible came straight from God:

***1 Peter 1:20-21***

knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 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.

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT. The writer of Hebrew reveals that when you and I speak the verses of the Bible out loud, it's called the Sword of the Spirit and is the most powerful weapon in the world:

***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, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

**King David** was a passionate man with many temptations, some of which he gave into. Yet there were many more times when he was holy and obedient to God, to the point where the Lord referred to him as "a man after My own heart." How did David stay pure?

***Psalms 119:9-16***

How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

10 With my whole heart I seek you;

let me not wander from your commandments!

11 I have stored up your word in my heart,

that I might not sin against you.

12 Blessed are you, O Lord;

teach me your statutes!

13 With my lips I declare

all the rules[a] of your mouth.

14 In the way of your testimonies I delight

as much as in all riches.

15 I will meditate on your precepts

and fix my eyes on your ways.

16 I will delight in your statutes;

I will not forget your word.



PSALM 119. Here's what he says in Psalm 119 on how to navigate through a dark and evil world:

***Psalm 119:105***

Your word [THE BIBLE] is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

**Solomon**, the wisest man in the world until Jesus, said this:

***Proverbs 30:5***

**Every word of God [THE BIBLE] proves true**; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

To conclude: ***do you trust Jesus?***

- Do believe He lived a sinless life?
- Do you believe that He was the Son of God? Deity in the flesh?
- The Messiah? The only Savior of the world?
- Do you believe He died on the Cross and rose from the dead on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Day?
- Do you believe He ascended to heaven and is returning some day?

**The only record of all these things is in the Bible and we only know of these things because of it.**

***When Christians doubt they can trust that the Bible is true, then they must doubt everything written therein*** including the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Holy Spirit, my wife, and other Christians said this to me in the 2 years of my personal conflict after I got Saved. All of them told me I couldn't pick and choose which things I felt were true and which weren't.

If you DO believe that Jesus was all the things I just listed then I ask you this: **if Jesus called upon the Scriptures to confirm Who He was, what He would do, and what would happen to Him, then how about us?**

**Do we have the same confidence in the Bible as He did?**

In other words, **IF IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR HIM CAN IT BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR US?**

***The same applies to the Apostles.*** We read their letters in the NT and are inspired, yet they quoted, taught on, and referenced the OT Bible constantly. It was clearly the Word of God to them, so is it for us?