

Another “Gospel” Series

(The Bible)

Part 2 cont’d / Part 3

4.5.23

II Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God^[a] and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

II Peter 1:20-21 Above all, you know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from the prophet’s own interpretation, ²¹ because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

II. What about textual variants?

From: www.alisachildersblog.com/blog/3-textual-variants-every-christian-should-know-about

A. What is a textual variant?

“When scholars have many copies (manuscripts) and early copies of a particular work, they can compare them to find out what the originals actually said.

Once in a while, a bit of text was even added or removed by a scribe after the original writing was sent out. All of these differences are called *textual variants*.”

1 John 5:7-8

For there are three that testify:^[a] ⁸ the Spirit, the water, and the blood—and these three are in agreement.

“Theologically, this can be perceived as a problem because these words so clearly affirm the doctrine of the Trinity. However, a case for the Trinity can be easily made without them, so no core doctrine is impacted.”

Mark 16:9-20

[⁹ Early on the first day of the week, after he had risen, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and reported to those who had been with him, as they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹ Yet, when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe it.

¹² After this, he appeared in a different form to two of them walking on their way into the country. ¹³ And they went and reported it to the rest, who did not believe them either.

¹⁴ Later he appeared to the Eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table. He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who saw him after he had risen. ¹⁵ Then he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;[ⓑ] ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes; [ⓐ] if they should drink anything deadly, it will not harm them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well."

¹⁹ So the Lord Jesus, after speaking to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word by the accompanying signs.]

"Considering that the resurrection of Jesus is affirmed elsewhere in Mark's Gospel and in the New Testament, this variant also does not impact any core doctrine."

John 7:53—8:11 ⁵³ Then each one went to his house.[†] ¹ But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

² At dawn he went to the temple again, and all the people were coming to him. He sat down and began to teach them.

³ Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, making her stand in the center. ⁴ "Teacher," they said to him, "this woman was caught in the act of committing adultery. ⁵ In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" ⁶ They asked this to trap him, in order that they might have evidence to accuse him.

Jesus stooped down and started writing on the ground with his finger. ⁷ When they persisted in questioning him, he stood up and said to them, "The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸ Then he stooped down again and continued writing on the ground. ⁹ When they heard this, they left one by one, starting with the older men. Only he was left, with the woman in the center. ¹⁰ When Jesus stood up, he said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

¹¹ "No one, Lord," ^[a] she answered.

"Neither do I condemn you," said Jesus. "Go, and from now on do not sin anymore."]

"In other words, it most likely happened, but it wasn't John who wrote it down. Either way, this variant doesn't challenge any core tenet of the faith."

B. Why do Christians need to know about these variants?

These variants are common knowledge among scholars, skeptics, and atheists, but are virtually unknown to many Christians outside the academic world.

Often this information is used to blindside believers in an attempt to sabotage their faith or undermine their confidence in the Bible.

If we are already familiar with these variants, we will be much less likely to be rattled by a clever skeptic on social media.

C. How should Christians respond?

It can be discouraging to find out that beloved portions of our Bibles may not, in fact, be part of the original writings. However, there are some things to keep in mind about these significant textual variants:

- We know what they are. Most modern English translations mark these variants with footnotes or brackets so the reader can easily detect them. Some translations leave them out altogether.**

- They make up less than 1% of the entire New Testament. As textual criticism continues to make progress and new discoveries, the gap within that 1% is closing!
- None of these variants impact any core doctrine—they don't challenge or cast doubt upon any essential Christian tenet of faith.
- These variants do not affect Biblical authority, inspiration, or inerrancy. Those terms generally apply to the original autographs, although the transmission and translation of texts is highly accurate in most cases.

Part 3

I. From: "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist"

by Normal L. Geisler/Frank Turek

A. *How Is the Original Reconstructed?*

Philippians 4:13 ("I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.")

Here are the hypothetical copies:

1. I can do all t#ings through Christ who gives me strength.
2. I can do all th#ngs through Christ who gives me strength.
3. I can do all thi#gs through Christ who gives me strength.
4. I can do all thin#s through Christ who gives me strength.

B. *Common Objections to Reliability*

1. History Cannot be Known –

"If history cannot be known, then no jury could ever reach a verdict! "

"if we cannot know history, then skeptics cannot claim that Christianity is untrue. To say that Christianity is untrue, the skeptic must know history."

2. The New Testament Writers Were Biased –

“What power did the New Testament writers gain by asserting that Jesus rose from the dead? The answer is ‘none.’ In fact, instead of gaining power, they got exactly the opposite—submission, servitude, persecution, torture, and death.”

II. We can trust the reliability of scripture!

General observations regarding reliability of scripture

A. Because the Bible does what it says (the prophecies come true)

*The Bible contains hundreds of detailed prophecies relating to the future of individual nations including Israel, certain cities, and mankind.

*There are over three hundred prophecies concerning Jesus Christ in the Old Testament.

*There is no other religious book with the extent or type of predictive prophecy that the Bible contains.

B. Because the Bible can't be stopped!

Because of its importance and its claim to be the very Word of God, the Bible has suffered more vicious attacks and attempts to destroy it than any other book in history.

*Satan has wanted to....

Gen 3:4 “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman.

Matt 4:6 “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone’

Jer 36:23 Each time Jehudi finished reading three or four columns, the king took a knife and cut off that section of the scroll. He then threw it into the fire, section by section, until the whole scroll was burned up.

*Others have wanted to

From early Roman Emperors, through communist dictators and on to modern-day atheists and agnostics, the Bible has withstood and outlasted all of its attackers and is still today the most widely published book in the world.

Is 55:11 It is the same with my word.
I send it out, and it always produces fruit.

It will accomplish all I want it to,
and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

Isa 40:8 The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God
stands forever."

- C. Because the Bible rises and falls on one event. The resurrection of Jesus.

I Cor 15:12 But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead? ¹³For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless

* Stanley says, "For the first 300 years the debate centered on an event, not a book," that's not quite right

- D. Because the Bible changes lives

Every serious Christian has come face to face with the reality that their desires, if given blind control over their lives, will lead to isolation, selfishness and depression. The whole truth is that "finding your own truth" ends in pain. We are very bad at knowing what will truly make us fulfilled. Joshua Pease

Close:

Psalms 119:15_I will meditate on your precepts
and think about your ways.
¹⁶ I will delight in your statutes;
I will not forget your word.