

## “YOUR WORD IS... Trustworthy”

Oh that the expression in Psalm 119:72 would capture the true feeling in our hearts: *God, Your Word is more precious to me than a warehouse full of pure gold and silver coins!* Today’s message is very clear: YOUR WORD IS... Trustworthy! The Scripture itself assures us that the Word of the Lord will stand and endure forever (see Isaiah 40:8, 1 Peter 1:24-25).

We can be assured that **the Bible we have today is accurate**. When the Holy Spirit inspired the authors of the Bible, the writings produced were completely without error. Even though it’s been copied thousands and thousands of times, you can see the hand of God guiding and protecting the Holy Scriptures as they were duplicated. When the Scriptures were copied by hand (before the invention of the Guttenberg Press or the Xerox machine), the Scribes were meticulous in their duties. Even with so many copies being produced, over so many years – the accuracy is amazing. The earliest copies of the New Testament Scriptures were in circulation within the lifetimes of those who could have disputed what they contained if they were not accurate. Here’s the bottom line: the reliability and integrity of the Scriptures is beyond question.

The Old Testament contains all the books and writings of the Hebrew Scriptures, which had been held as the authoritative Scripture for centuries before the time of Christ. As for the New Testament, the early Church leaders came together to discuss the need to formally decide which writings would be included in the official collection of the New Testament Scripture. This was necessary, because false teachings were beginning to appear that were contrary to what the apostles had been teaching. The main criteria for inclusion in the New Testament “canon” was that the books or letters had to be written by an apostle, or by a close follower of an apostle. As these were examined for accuracy, they were also examined as to see if God had already been using these writings in the lives of the people in a way that was consistent with the message of Christ recorded by the eyewitnesses.

It’s important to affirm, that **we can trust what the Bible says about Jesus**. There is no question that Jesus of Nazareth existed and lived during the time claimed by the New Testament. The Scriptural writings are eyewitness accounts, or written by close associates of those who witnessed the words and works of Jesus Christ, firsthand. Since the New Testament writings came out during the lifetimes of the apostles and eyewitnesses, plenty of people could have come forward to refute the written reports of Jesus if they were not accurate. This is especially important when we look at the death and resurrection of Jesus. And then, consider this – the writers of the New Testament were willing to die for what they wrote. No one would willingly die for what they knew was not true.

We can also be assured that **the Bible does not contain any contradictions or errors**. Some critics like to say that it does, but when you ask them to show you one, they cannot, because they’re merely repeating what they’ve been told regarding the Bible. Some question the miracles in the Bible, but if a person doesn’t believe in God, then they can’t believe in miracles, because a miracle is something that only God can do. Even the difficult areas of the Bible end up proving to be harmonious and complementary upon closer examination. Some skeptics say that Jesus

didn't really die, and the resurrection was a hoax. But the Romans were good at putting people to death, and they made sure Jesus was dead. The number of eyewitness accounts of those who saw Jesus dead, and then alive – is overwhelming. The evidence for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is phenomenal.

We can also be assured that **we can absolutely trust the Bible**. The thread of unity throughout the Bible is astounding, considering the diversity of human authors the Holy Spirit inspired to write the Bible. The Bible was written by about 40 different people, over a period of about 1,500 years, and yet they all agree 100% about what they wrote (since the breath of God inspired them all). Many lived in different places, eras, and did not know each other; yet they are in complete agreement. The authors were people of varied occupations and lifestyles; yet they all agree. The Bible covers hundreds of controversial subjects; and yet, it speaks with incredible unity. From cover to cover you'll find there is one Hero (the Messiah), one villain (satan), one problem (sin), one purpose (salvation). Truly there was a Master Architect who designed this Book, and it was the breath of the Holy Spirit that inspired the Holy Scriptures.

We can also trust the Bible because of its durability. Many efforts have been undertaken to destroy the Bible; yet, it remains, and is still changing lives. God promised that His Word would endure, and He has been faithful in that promise. The reason for this is simple: the Bible is true, and God's truth has the capacity to change lives and to transform people. **In spite of its great power, however, the only time the Bible can be defeated is when it remains unopened, unread and unapplied – then it is powerless.** We can trust the Bible because of its incredible truthfulness. The Bible is historically accurate when it mentions historical or geographical information. Archeology has done nothing but confirm what the Bible says about what is written in its pages. I like what someone said, *“Every time a spade goes into the ground on an archeological dig another critic gets buried.”* No one can deny the personal impact the Bible will have on those who read and act upon its truths. The lives that have been changed by the Word of God number in the millions and millions.

## Discussion Guide/Action Steps

1. Do you confidently believe that the Bible we have today is the true Word of God?
2. For detailed evidence of the resurrection of Jesus see Josh McDowell's work entitled, *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*. Lee Strobel's books are really good, too, like: *The Case for Christ*, *The Case for Faith*, *The Case for Easter*, *The Case for Creation*, etc.
3. Are you a person whose life has been changed by reading and acting upon Word of God?
4. Even after considering all the evidence for trusting the Bible, it still comes down to a matter of faith. Do you believe? Do you completely trust the Bible?