

FULTON COUNTY

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The Authority of the Bible

The Bible is the supreme authority in religion. It is the standard by which we determine anything to be good or bad. The importance in making and substantiating such statements is emphasized by the many contrary ideas being promulgated among the various religious groups of our day. Some teach that the "church" is the final authority. Others teach that there are other inspired books which, they believe, are equal to the Bible in authority. Many have the idea that the Bible is not really dependable as the Word of God anyway, because, they say, we do not have the original manuscripts and the translations of our day are not accurate. Nowadays, there are those who believe that each man is his own authority and that the standards of right and wrong change from generation to generation being determined by the traditions and customs of the day. Those who would take away the Bible as authority offer absolutely nothing in its place which can produce the effects of the Bible and supply the needs of complex man. The further any people get from the Bible, the more abased and barbaric they become. This is the very thing so vividly expressed in the second chapter of Peter's second epistle.

In establishing the authority of the Bible, let us first say that GOD IS. This is so obvious that it would take a fool to say otherwise. Secondly, the Bible is from God. Brother Graddy discusses this elsewhere in this issue. From the standpoint of good reason, if you accept these first two statements, in order to be consistent, you must accept the Bible as being dependable. For, if God went to such lengths in developing a plan and revealing a message, by what line of reason would we suppose He would permit it to shortly become so corrupted and inaccurate that it cannot be depended on for guidance.

What does the Bible, as we have it today, say for itself? In the "last days", the last period of time on the earth, God speaks to us through His Son (Heb. 1:1,2). All the things Jesus taught and intended for us to know were miraculously brought to the remembrance of the Apostles (John 14:26). The things thus received, they wrote down (Eph. 3:3,4; 2 Pet. 1:14-16; Rev. 1:11). Their writings grouped together we call the NEW TESTAMENT. It is that which is written in the books (Rev. 20:12), the word of Jesus (John 12:48), by which we shall be judged in the final day. To teach anything in addition, or contrary, to that which Jesus taught and was revealed to the Apostles, is to bring the curse upon oneself (Gal. 1:8,9). To teach that which is in the scriptures, is to teach enough to make a man "perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16,17). In that the Bible makes such claims for itself, if it is not exactly that, its pages are filled with lies and it is not dependable in anything at all, and certainly cannot be a message from an eternal, omnipotent, perfect being. If it is from God, we must believe and live by it. It is much more reasonable to believe than to disbelieve. --RE

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WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

When the keeper of the prison asked Paul what he must do to be saved, Paul replied: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:31) In order for them to believe it was necessary that they hear the word. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14) So, "they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." (Acts 16:32) Hearing the word of the Lord, the man believed and was baptized. Obviously, baptism was a part of the "word of the Lord", for where else could this man have heard of it. But, we know beyond any doubt that baptism was a part of the "word of the Lord". Jesus, just before he went back to the Father, said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16) This is why the jailor heard the word, believed, and was baptized.

WHAT KIND OF BIRD ARE YOU?

--by Bill Graddy

You see around you every day,
Birds of every hue--
But have you ever stopped to think,
What kind of "bird" are you?

Are you like an English Sparrow,
Without a thought or care--
Who gathers up some bits of trash,
And builds its nest--just anywhere?

Or, are you so dissatisfied--
(Just like an old Blue Jay)
That you make life--miserable
Because you harp and quarrel all day?

Or do folk say, behind your back
(So you may not have heard)
You are like the glorious melody--
of the Lovely Mocking Bird!

Or, like the whistler with its yodel
Or the Dove--that coos, so sweet,
Or, like the lovely Red Bird
Bringing joy--to all you meet?

Are you gentle like the little Quail
That whistles "Bob White" to its mate,
Or like the lowly Buzzard--
Whose life is lived--on waste?

Or, are you like the Whippoor Will,
Whose chimes enchant the night,
Or, like the Robin Redbreast--
Perfection--at its height."

So stop--think--consider this,
If before this day is through--
What could you say--if someone ask--
What kind of bird--are you?

"The life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story, and writes another; and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what he hoped to make it."

James M. Barrie

The INSPIRATION of the BIBLE

Without the Scripture, Christianity is up for grabs! Without the Bible, there is no proof and knowledge of the creation of all things! If these two statements are true, and I believe they are, the Scripture then must be proven to be the inspired Word of God. Therefore, let us prove that the Bible is the inspired Word from God to man for his instruction in righteousness.

From (Theos, God, and pneo, to breathe) we get "inspired of God" or "inspiration of God" as used in 2 Tim. 3:16. Thus, we can see that inspiration means, God breathed. The Bible itself claims to be inspired. 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. It has always been ethical and proper for one to testify for himself. His testimony has always been held as correct until proven wrong. The claim then by the Word to be inspired cannot go unnoticed. If the Bible were uninspired, we could seize upon its imperfections readily. But, where does the Word contradict itself? It does not, therefore, one of the great evidences that the Word is inspired. What 40 men could write over a period of about 1600 years without one contradiction and such completeness? The Holy Spirit's part in man's redemption has been as spokesman. He inspired the apostles by baptising them to speak the word without private interpretation. 2 Pet. 1:20-21. Thus, we can rest assured that we have all the truth as Christ promised, John 16:13, and this truth is contained in the New Testament, John 17:17, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

The Bible is historically true. It is the only divine calendar. The ancient records of men are few and faulty. Preservation of these few and faulty accounts does not reveal a vast amount of information, but God's Book is an accurate storehouse of knowledge! which is another great evidence of inspiration.

The Bible is scientifically accurate. Although it was not written primarily as a science book, it has the latest information

on scientific findings. Science deals with the present. It cannot go back in the past with absolute accuracy neither can it look into the future with any degree of completeness. The Bible is the only book that can do this. It takes us from the beginning to the end and fills in all that God intended to reveal to man. The Bible contains many scientific principles now, that men will stand aghast in a few years because they did not find these sooner. The planets (handiwork of God) prove that God is. Psa. 19:1. One cannot accept God without accepting His Word pleasing unto Him. These are inseparable. Genesis 8:22 is one example of the scientific accuracy of the Bible which is another evidence of the inspiration of the Word.

The fact that the Scripture works whenever and wherever it is employed is another evidence of inspiration. In every case the psychology of the incident is according to man as the Bible reveals him. Can you think of one characteristic of man that the Bible has overlooked? Wherein has man's behaviour changed from the beginning? God revealed all about man because He created him and needs no help from man relative to his being. John 2:25. The Bible is the only book that reveals from whence man came, his purpose in life and where he will spend eternity. The Bible outlines this information with a thread of evidence that man stands in the deepest awe! Man is not capable of thinking deeper than the inspired Word. Heb. 4:12. He must live by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. Matt. 4:4. If pragmatists were Bible students then they would do everything in the way the Bible teaches because it works perfectly. This cannot be said of non-believing pragmatists, therefore, another great evidence of inspiration.

Consider the metaphors of the Bible. As a fire, hammer, light, sword and seed it demands attention from the highest king to the least nomad. All men have read and studied the Word with great amazement. Dr. Schurman, President of Cornell Uni-

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versity, said: "The Bible is the most valuable document in the English literature. No man can be called an uneducated man who knows his Bible, and no man can be called an educated man who does not know his Bible." Thomas Jefferson, most noted of our founding fathers, said: "I have always said, and will always say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better homes, better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands." Abraham Lincoln said: "I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a better man." These powerful metaphors have impressed many men of renown that the Bible is from God.

Think of these principles working in each of the three dispensations of time. Meditate upon the climate and environment of God's people from the beginning and note the perfection and completeness in all their travels.

What is your life? Christians know of the power of the Word of God by the change it has brought about in their lives. From drunkards to gospel preachers, from murderers to lovers of life, and from animal passions to the height of purity, men stand tall with their changed lives as monuments to the inspiration of the Scripture. Every individual must obey these God given words for the remission of his sins. He must live by these principles in this life if he inherits eternal life. The resurrection unto eternal life with the Father is predicated upon each one's acceptance and obedience to these words. John 12:48.

There will always be men who will turn up their nose at the Bible. 2 Pet. 3:3. But, we have given ample proof that these words are God breathed. We must conclude that God has spoken to the man He created and the Bible is a record of that conversation. Heaven will be the reward for all who die faithfully in Christ having been obedient to His Word.

Bill Graddy

Little Rock, Arkansas

SLOW DOWN!

Along the streets and highways we constantly see signs warning us to SLOW DOWN!

In the past 10 years, how many times do you suppose doctors have said to their patients SLOW DOWN!

Economists tell us that our shopping habits and buying sprees need to SLOW DOWN!

Can the church gain any valuable lessons from these two words? We think so and let us note some of them. SLOW DOWN man, where are you going? Who do you think God is? In this age of automation, let us not speed past God. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Matt. 16:26. "For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out." 1 Tim. 6:7. Parents SLOW DOWN! Take time with your children. Be fathers and mothers to your children. Fathers how long has it been since you took your sons out for relaxation and recreation? Does your family have one night a week together? If not, SLOW DOWN! And, what about Bible study and church attendance? Do you need to SLOW DOWN here and take inventory? In this feverish age, we have too much "hittin' and missin'" in Bible classes. Parents who "hit and miss" need to SLOW DOWN, walk, do some sober thinking! What kind of impressions are we making on our children? Let us not race by them only to turn at the next intersection of our life--old age--full of regrets. SLOW DOWN, "behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2. BG

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