

Fake News About the Bible
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We are in a new sermon series called Fake News – Replacing Lies with Truth. This kind of study is called apologetics – which is the branch of theology having to do with defending and proving Christianity. It comes from the Greek word – APOLOGIA – which means a "verbal defense." 1 Peter 3:15 says:

Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you. But do this with gentleness and respect.

How are we to defend the faith if we are not ready with an answer? Acts 17:2-4 says:

As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said. Some of the Jews were persuaded...

In order to reason from Scripture, we must first know what is fake news about the Bible and what is the true good news of the Bible. Remember – Satan is a liar and he has cast doubt on the word of God from the very beginning. Genesis 3:1 says:

The serpent was more subtle and crafty than any living creature of the field which the Lord God had made. And he (Satan) said to the woman, "Can it really be that God has said, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?"

We see here what Satan attacks: God's word. He wants keep you out of God's word – but if he can't do that – he will twist God's word to make you believe something that is not true.

We need to be so familiar with the truth that we easily recognize lies! Satan knew that if he could get Adam and Eve to doubt God's word –then he could have his way with them. And he knows if he can get you to doubt God's word – he can have his way with you! That's why he spreads fake news about the Bible.

1- Fake news says the Bible is just one of many holy books that come from God

There are other so called "holy books" – the Koran, book of Mormon. They all claim to come from God. But the evidence proves otherwise. For example – The Book of Mormon describes three civilizations that supposedly existed in the Americas from about 600 BC to 400 AD. There have been thousands of archaeological digs trying to find evidence of these civilizations, but none has

ever been found. Yet, every time they turn over a shovel of dirt in Israel it proves the Bible is true! So, that's one reason the Bible is different from other "holy books."

2- Fake news says the Bible is old, outdated and not relevant to people today

Yes – the Bible is an ancient book – but it was written by an eternal God. Psalm 119:89 says:

Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.

God is eternal, which means He exists outside of time and He knows the end from the beginning. Isaiah 46:9-10 says:

I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come.

So when God inspired people to write the Bible – He did so from an eternal perspective. That means that God was very aware of the times we are living in now! And the book we wrote applies to all people in all places at all times! It is the unchanging revelation of an eternal God!

I've discovered that the people who think the Bible is outdated and irrelevant are usually people who want to live a lifestyle that the Bible says is sinful. For instance, some want to have a sexual relationship outside of marriage, which the Bible says is sinful. And it's more convenient for them to believe the fake news that the Bible doesn't apply any more than repent of sin!

And by the way – these sins are not new! God spoke the truth about them in the Bible and that truth is still true today! You break those principles at your own peril! So I encourage you to be a doer of the word and live in God's blessing!

3- Fake news says that the Bible was written by men, not by God

I guess it all boils down to this essential question: who really wrote the Bible? Fake news says that men wrote the Bible. But the Bible itself claims to be written by God. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says:

All Scripture is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

The word "inspiration" comes from the Greek word "theopneustos" which literally means "God-breathed." This describes God as the source of the whole Bible. It is not the product of elevated human consciousness or enlightened human intellect, but is directly "breathed" from God.

The Bible was written by God through men. How did God write through men? God inspired men to write the Bible, but He did not do it the same way with every writer. Hebrews 1:1 says:

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways.

All we know is that God inspired the writers to write. None of what was given was merely the private opinion of the writer. Each writer was “moved by” the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20-21 says:

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

This does not mean that the writers were merely robots writing automatically without their conscious participation. 1 Corinthians 2:13 expands on the process by which the revelation of the Bible was given.

This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

This biblical view of the Bible’s origin means every word is inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. Exactly how God “inspired” the many biblical writers is an intriguing mystery. But we know that God guided the 1500 year process, from beginning to end. He personally saw to it that humans got the message He wanted to deliver. As we saw in Hebrews 1:1, God spoke in various ways. For example, God’s voice is heard in Matthew 3:17:

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased."

God’s writing can be seen in Exodus 32:15-16:

Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back. The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

Other words are the actual words God told people to speak or write. We see this with a prophet in Jeremiah 30:1-2:

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you. Some messages were received from God through dreams, visions or angels.

Some words in the Bible are God’s truth put in the writer’s words under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit after much research. Luke 1:1-3 says:

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you...

The Bible is the word of God expressed in the language of men. So, we have various styles and different writers, but one inspired Word with one Author. God is solely responsible for every word of scripture.

Some people believe that the Bible is great literature, but it is not the Word of God. That is fake news and here are seven reasons why:

(1) We know the Bible is God’s Word because Jesus said so!

Jesus confirms the truth that every word of the Bible is given by God in Matthew 5:18 when He said:

God's Law is more real and lasting than the stars in the sky and the ground at your feet. Long after stars burn out and earth wears out, God's Law will be alive and working.

There is no room for debate: Jesus believed and taught the inspiration of the Bible—that every word is God-breathed. What makes Jesus the final authority? The resurrection!

(2) We know the Bible is God’s Word because of its unity.

The Bible is actually a collection of 66 books written over a period of 1,500 years in 3 languages by over 40 different men on 3 continents. These men had extremely diverse backgrounds, including kings, fishermen, shepherds, priests, prophets, a general, a cupbearer, a doctor, a tax collector, a farmer and a tentmaker.

Yet, with all this diversity, the Bible has one unifying message: Jesus Christ and Him crucified. You can find Christ in every book of the Bible. Try to get 10 experts in any field to write on a subject, and you will probably have 10 opinions, but the Bible is unified in its message.

(3) The Bible is God’s Word because of its accuracy.

In other words – the Bible is without any errors. This is called the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Isn’t that what you would expect from a book from God – a book with no mistakes in it?

Fake news says that there are many errors and contradictions in the Bible. But there are no inaccuracies or contradictions in the Word of God. People occasionally think they find one, but they are always proved wrong.

The Bible gives thousands of names, places and dates with total accuracy. And accuracy is vitally important and that's why there are consequences for fake news.

For instance, 3 CNN employees had to resign over a false story linking a Trump transition team member with Russia. Legendary newsman Dan Rather was fired for fake news about George Bush's military career. The chief content officer at the Independent Journal Review was demoted after publishing a false story claiming the former President Obama pressured a judge in Hawaii to rule against Trump's travel ban.

Over the years, many books have been recalled and destroyed because of wrong facts. On the other hand, the Bible has faced the greatest scrutiny over the longest time of any book in history. Centuries after its origin, it maintains the integrity of its proclamations, promises, and prophecies.

(4) The Bible is God's Word because of archaeology.

There is not one shred of archaeological evidence against the Bible. In fact, every archaeological dig only serves to prove and confirm the validity of the Bible.

Since King James commissioned the KJV translation in 1611, archaeologists have unearthed Bible manuscripts much older than the ones that his translators used—up to 1000 years older – and they all say the same thing.

When Pastor Deb and I went to Israel – we visited a place called Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1940's. These scrolls were preserved in caves near the Dead Sea. Some of the copies of the Old Testament found there date back to 200 years before Christ. And they have no major variations from the newer manuscripts. The point is that archeology proves the Bible to be true.

(5) The Bible is God's Word because of its preservation.

Down through the centuries, many rulers have tried to destroy the Bible, yet it remains to this day. Just as God originally inspired the Bible, He preserved His Word for future generations. The process of copying and recopying the Bible has continued to our time. Until the 15th century, all the copying was done by hand.

Then, with the invention of printing in Europe, copies could be made in greater quantities. This made the Scriptures available to many people, rather than just the few who could afford handmade copies.

Let me just add – people gave their lives so we could have Bibles. Surprisingly, church leaders in ancient times resisted the notion of translating God's Word into everyday language.

The prevailing opinion was that people should get their teaching from ministers, not the Bible—because it was thought most people were not capable of understanding God’s Word without a spiritual guide.

Oxford scholar John Wycliffe was viewed as a heretic for creating the first English Bible—which was banned in England. He died before anyone killed him, but 43 years after he died, church leaders dug up his remains and burned them.

William Tyndale produced an improved English translation in the early 1500s. For this, he was publicly strangled with a rope and his body burned. His dying words were, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.” Within 2 years the king ordered English Bibles placed in every church.

God used men like Wycliffe and Tyndale to preserve the Bible and to get it into language we can read.

(6) The Bible is God’s Word because of fulfilled prophecies.

One of the unique and fascinating aspects of the Bible is that no other religious literature has the accuracy of fulfilled prophecy. Prophecy is not rare in the Bible. In fact, 27% of the Bible contains prophetic material.

Biblical predictions recorded sometimes hundreds of years in advance of their happening are fulfilled in minute detail. The Bible predicted the rise and fall of every major world empire which left its mark on the Middle East. Every one! Persian, Greek, Egyptian, Roman and other empires were prophesied about hundreds of years before they existed.

Other major events were predicted also. For instance, 1 Kings 13:2 predicts King Josiah by name and lineage 300 years before he was born. It also predicts what he would do as king. This prophecy is truly amazing, but it is not isolated. There are, in fact, 100s of prophecies in the Bible which predict future events – all of which are 100% accurate.

There are over 300 prophecies about the messiah given by 30 prophets over thousands of years – all of which came to pass in one person – Jesus Christ. No other person who has ever lived or ever will live can have all these prophecies come true in their lives. This shows the supernatural origin of Christ and of the Bible. Romans 16:25-26 says:

Now to Him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey Him.

With great detail, God singled out His Son, Jesus Christ, from anyone who has ever lived in history - past, present, or future.

Bible predicts His exact lineage; the place, time and manner of His birth; where and how He would minister, how people would react, how He would die – by crucifixion – and this prophecy was written 800 years before crucifixion even began to be practiced by the Romans.

The amazing thing is that all the prophecies of the Messiah were made at least 400 years before He was born. You could possibly find 1 or 2 prophecies fulfilled in other men, but not all 300 prophecies. That would be like someone predicting today who will be President of the US in 500 years. Not only that, but where they will be born, who their parents would be, what they will do before becoming President, where they will live, how they will die. It's impossible – with man – but possible with God.

The science of probability says that the chance of just 8 of the Messianic prophecies coming to pass in one individual is 1 in 10^{17} . That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. The chances of just 48 of these prophecies being fulfilled in one person is 1 in 10^{157} (a one followed by 157 zeros!).

To help us understand this staggering figure, suppose we take silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas (approximate area: 263,000 square miles). They will cover all of the state 2 feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes anywhere in the state. But he can pick up only 1 silver dollar, the one that was marked. What chance would he have of getting the right one? The same exact chance that the prophets had in writing these prophecies and having them all come true in any one man. This means that the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of the Bible. It could not happen any other way.

7- The other reason we know the Bible is the word of God is that it has changed our lives.

We've all heard the statement from the Bible – the truth will set you free. But most people don't know the first part of that from John 8:31-32
If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

In other words – knowing God's word leads to knowing truth which leads to freedom.

And many of us have been addicted – but we've been set free by God's word!
Many of us have been depressed – but we've been encouraged by God's word!
Many of us have been hurt – but we've been healed by God's word!
Many of us have been lost – but God's word showed us the way!
Many of us had doubts – but the word of God built our faith!
Many of us had fears – but the word of God gave us courage!
Many of us were weak – but we discovered the truth of Hebrews 4:12
For the word of God is alive and powerful.

And once you experience that life and that power - it overcomes any fake news about the Bible. Hallelujah!!