

Morning Worship

January 31, 2016

Pastor — Allan Lane	Organ --- Alva Lou Schottel
Worship Leader — Tim Waters	Piano — Marcia Hart
As you enter for worship, please silence your cell phones.	
(CCLI permit # 424692 covers all copyright song lyrics)	
Welcome and Fellowship	Allan/People
Chorus # 146 "O How He Loves You and Me"	Tim/People
Worship Prayer	Allan Lane
Hymn # 4 "To God Be the Glory"	Tim/People
Responsive Reading # 701	Allan/People
Hymn # 522 "When the Morning Comes"	Tim/People
Chorus # 153 "My Tribute"	Tim/People
Offering Prayer	John Lewis
Tithes and Offerings	People
Offering Music	Marcia Hart
Hymn # 413 "Faith Is the Victory"	Tim/People
Anthem "Open Up the Heavens"	Worship Choir
Children's Worship	(Children are dismissed)
Scripture Reading	Allan/People
Message	Allan Lane
Hymn # 294 "Have Thine Own Way"	Tim/People
Prayer Concerns	Allan/People
Chorus of # 571 "Let Others See Jesus in You"	Tim/People

Is the Bible True?

2 Peter 1:16-22

We live in a world that is at war with the Word of God. There are those who despise it and are against everything it teaches. There are those who distort it and

twist it to fit their own ideas. There are those who disregard it and claim that it's false and unreliable. We ask this question to remind and encourage us that the Bible is reliable and true.

Here are 5 facts which verify the reliability and truthfulness of the Bible.

1) The Authorship of the Bible.

You have three options when it comes to the authorship of the Bible. Either the Bible was written by good men, bad men, or God Himself. Let's consider each option.

Was the Bible written by merely good men? No, because the Old Testament alone claims over 2,600 times to be written by God. It's inconceivable that good men would lie about the same subject 2,600 times.

Was the Bible written by bad men? No, because it's inconceivable that bad men would write a book that continually lifts men and women to the highest plain of morality and purity, and demands the most exacting standards of righteousness, and pronounces doom upon all sinners.

The only logical alternative is, the Bible was written by God (2 Peter 1:20-21). And since the Bible was written by God, it is reliable and true because its author - God Himself - is reliable and true.

2) The Authenticity of the Bible.

Most folks don't realize that we have an abundant collection of ancient Bible manuscripts and these ancient Bible manuscripts verify that the content of the Bible has not been changed down through the centuries.

Let me put it another way. In universities, it's not uncommon to be asked to read Homer's "Iliad" (8th century BCE.) or Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars (50 BCE). Homer's "Iliad" is the most famous book of ancient Greece and nobody denies its authenticity. There are at least 640 ancient fragmented manuscripts, the oldest fragments date from the third century BCE. But the oldest complete manuscript dates no earlier than the eleventh century CE. That's around 1,000 years after the original. Nobody doubts the authenticity of Caesar's Gallic Wars because we have at least 10 ancient copies. It was popular among the people before Caesar died in 44 BCE. However, the oldest was copied around 1,000 years after the original. There are 640 copies of the Iliad and 10 copies of the Gallic Wars.

What about the NT? There are over 5,800 existing ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, 10,000 Latin manuscripts, and 9,300 manuscripts in various other languages including Slavic, Syriac, Gothic, Ethiopic, Coptic and Armenian. These ancient hand-copies have been studied and examined over and over again with "a fine tooth comb" and they verify that the books of the NT are authentic documents - they have not changed down through the years. Ancient NT manuscripts have been found in Palestine, Syria, and Egypt, and their content is virtually identical no matter where they were found.

What about the Old Testament? Surely you've heard of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which refer to over 800 ancient scrolls discovered in 11 different caves near the Dead Sea from 1947 to 1956. The Dead Sea Scrolls date back to at least 100 B.C. and they contain fragments from every book of the OT except Esther. Scholars have examined those fragments and found them to be virtually identical with our standard Hebrew Bible.

There is more evidence for the authenticity of the 66 books of the Bible than there is for any other book from the ancient world.

3) The Accuracy of the Bible.

A lot of folks claim the Bible is filled with errors and contradictions. But what amazes me is that a majority of people who make that claim know very little about the

Bible. It seems when we encounter such skeptical persons who say the Bible is filled with errors and contradictions, we back off in defeat. Even though we know better, it's as if we are in agreement. We lack confidence that the Word of God stands on its own. Our one reply should be for that person to show us just ONE error or contradiction in the Bible. Often their reply will be they don't know where it is chapter and verse. Well if they don't know, is it really there? We must have verses to contradict that and the Bible is the best source. I read about a guy who said there were errors in the Bible. So he was asked to point it out. He said it's the verse that says the earth is flat. Sometimes it's next to impossible to convince someone that the Bible doesn't say such a thing. Like, "God helps those who help themselves." It's not there.

Folks, a majority of people who claim the Bible is filled with errors and contradictions know very little about the Bible. The fact of the matter is the vast majority of folks who have studied the Bible in-depth are amazed at its accuracy. Consider . . .

a) Scientific Accuracy

The Bible is not a science book, but whatever observation it makes about the world of nature is true. Skeptics argue that the Bible is full of scientific errors, but that isn't the case at all. Every now and then the theories of science disagree with the teachings of the Bible, but usually the theories of science just need some time to catch up. For instance . . .

Job 26:7, He stretches the northern [skies] over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.

Isaiah 40:22, God is enthroned above the circle of the earth; its inhabitants are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like thin cloth and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

Leviticus 13:46, He will remain unclean as long as he has the infection; he is unclean. He must live alone in a place outside the camp.

There is no conflict between science and the Bible. It's just that sometimes the theories of science need time to catch up.

b) Historical Accuracy

The Bible is not a history book, but the history it records is reliable and accurate. One of historian's basic tools is Archaeology and it has confirmed the historicity of the Bible time and time again (Moses wrote the Pentateuch) (The Assyrian Empire) (The existence of David).

c) Prophetic Accuracy

The OT alone has over 2,000 specific prophecies that have already been fulfilled. It is the only book of its kind with so many accurate prophecies (mention some of the fulfilled OT prophecies about Christ - the reason for his coming, the time of his coming, the manner of his birth, the place of his birth, the manner of his life, his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection). The first coming of Jesus verifies the prophetic accuracy of the Bible.

4) The Ability of the Bible.

The Bible has the ability to Transform Lives (Hebrews 4:12). The Bible is alive and it's has the power to address the deepest needs of your soul and change your life for the better. It has the power to save the sinner, sanctify the saint, soothe the sufferer, and satisfy the scholar. It has the ability to transform lives.

For 2,000 years the Bible, often unaided by any human intervention, has transformed the lives of those who read it, many times dramatically so. St. Augustine is a good example. For most of his life he was a famed academic in the Roman

Empire. He was very successful in rhetoric, a noble profession. But he lived a thoroughly dissolute, self-indulgent, immoral life. The time came when he began to consider the claims of Christianity.

He was alone in a garden one day when he heard a child singing out a line from a children's game: "Pick it up and read, pick it up and read." He turned to his copy of the Scriptures, which was opened to Roman 13. His eyes were drawn to verses 13-14. Deeply convicted, he surrendered to Christ, and the Roman rhetorician went on to become the Christian bishop of Hippo, the greatest theologian after Paul, and one of the most formidable intellects of Western civilization.

A transformed life is one of the most effective arguments for the reliability and truthfulness of the Bible. How can the Bible transform your life?"

5) The Acceptance of the Bible.

In his book, *Light for Anxious Souls*, George Cutting told about a farmer who lacked the assurance of salvation. He foolishly prayed that as an evidence of his acceptance, the Lord would cause 10 sheep of his flock — and only 10 — to gather in a certain shed out in the pasture. Later that day, when the farmer anxiously approached the shed, he was relieved to find exactly 10 sheep. That gave him a temporary sense of peace. Doubt returned with the shocking thought that it may have been just a coincidence. So he asked the Lord that 10 different sheep might gather in an opposite corner of the pasture. And they did. When the farmer was asked, "Did this give you assurance?" he said, "No, nothing gave me certainty until I got the sure Word of God for it." Cutting concluded, "he was all in a fog of uncertainty until he planted his foot firmly on the "Thus saith the Lord."

Romans 10:17 implies that the Bible will transform your life when you respond to its message in faith. It's not enough to just believe the Bible is reliable and true. You've got to respond to its message in faith.

What about you? Have you responded to the Bible in faith? If so, then I commend you and encourage you to read, study, meditate, and practice the Bible on a daily basis. If not, then I encourage you to examine the evidence and I pray that the Holy Spirit will convince you that the Bible is reliable and true.

Conclusion

In the January, 1966 edition of an American journal called The Christian Century, the editor wrote of receiving a small "assemble it yourself" package by mail. After spending an hour in frustration trying to put the pieces together, he discovered in the box a message from the manufacturer. Printed on a neat, white card were the words, "If all else fails, follow the directions."

Most in our generation today are puzzled, bewildered and confused, not knowing the way to worthwhile living. Now comes the question, "Whose directions are we to follow?" Men once took their directions from the Bible. However, over the past fifty years, our nation has all but abandoned this trustworthy resource. As a result, we are still reaping the bitter fruits that come from neglecting God's counsel.

- In the 1960s the Supreme Court ruled that prayer and Bible reading in public schools violated the Constitution.
- They prohibited the teaching of Creationism and replaced it with the theory of evolution.
- They removed God's standard of truth and instead gave children the responsibility of determining right and wrong on their own.
- To determine whether the Bible is relevant, one need only look back over the last 40 years of our nation's history.

- If people don't believe the Bible is relevant today, it isn't because we tried it and it failed, but because we have ignored it and have virtually destroyed the morality of the last generation.

Christian scholar Harold Lindsell gives this perspective on the life-transforming importance of Christianity as revealed in the Scriptures:

"We can trust the Bible [because] it does what it claims it will do: it transforms lives. Millions of people have testified that they have been forgiven and have received the gift of eternal life. Their prayers have been answered; their deepest needs satisfied. Lives have been radically changed. Thieves steal no more, liars become honest, adulterers live holy lives, and covetous people lose their greed. Churches, schools, and hospitals have risen as proof of the salutary effect the gospel of Jesus Christ has had on multitudes."

Where Will You Go For Instructions?

Cultural Interpretation of Scripture

One of the most interesting myths in modern society is that Scripture is only seen as truth as long as we agree with it. This is referred to as *subjective truth* or the attempt to make Scripture fit the beliefs one wants it to have. Perhaps you've heard the statement, "God said it; I believe it; that settles it." While it sounds like a reasonable statement, in reality, once God says it that ends it. Whether or not we believe it is of no consequence. Our belief has no bearing in the truth of the matter. Truth is truth and it is promulgated by the will and testimony of God and not by the beliefs of those that choose whether or not to follow Him. This attitude toward Scripture does not change what God has said.

Scriptures difficult for some to accept are being classified as "cultural issues." Many declare certain truths condemned by God because of the cultural taboos of the day. However, I believe God in His wisdom and righteousness forbade these items because He knew the harm that would be brought to the world if they were accepted. Just to be fair, one must admit there are cultural items in Scripture. They rode camels and donkeys while we ride cars and trucks. They wore sandals and flowing robes while we wear pants and shoes. Those are cultural issues. But some Scripture references are not to be taken culturally. This is illustrated in circumstances such as women deacons and pastors, dress, premarital sex and homosexuality.

Women deacons and pastors: (1Timothy 3:2, 12). I have met some women who would make wonderful deacons and pastors. However, it's not a matter of ability, but eligibility. As a freshman in high school I took American Government, and probably understood the electoral process as well as anyone at that time. However I was not eighteen years old so I couldn't vote. It had nothing to do with ability and everything to do with eligibility. We don't understand the reasoning behind all that God has commanded. God's stance on anything is for us to do as He says (I Kings 11:38).

Adultery, Premarital sex and Homosexuality: All sexual sins are considered an abomination before God. Sexual sins are easily justified in the mind of the sinner (Romans 1:26-28, Matthew 5:28). Sexual sin is one of the hardest for us to overcome (James 1:13-15). The argument "God made me that way" is false. No matter which sexual sin is being committed it is still a lie. Giving in to our own desire causes us to sin. God will not tempt us into sinning. It is contrary to His very nature to cause those He has called to be holy, to sin.

God does not determine whether cultural issues are sinful or not. Being God He knew from the beginning there would be cultural differences throughout history. What was sin in the past is still sin today. God has not changed His mind. God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8). If those looking for a way to justify their sin are not stopped by God's Word, what makes us think they will change their view because of the words of the church? Those that are truly looking for the truth will find it.

Up-Coming Events.....

January 31 — January Bible Study— 2 Corinthians, at Noon
— Mission Trip Meeting 3:00 pm at Calvary Baptist

February 1 — Food Kitchen 5:30 pm

February 2 — Groundhog Day

February 4 — Senior Adult Event Copeland Baptist Church

February 4-5 — Missouri State Evangelism/Discipleship Conf.

February 7 — January Bible Study— 2 Corinthians, at Noon

February 10 — Prayer Warriors 10 am

February 12 — Abraham Lincoln's Birthday

February 14 — Valentines Day

February 15 — Presidents' Day

February 21 — Food Pantry Collection Day
— January Bible Study— 2 Corinthians, at Noon

GROW Team

Commit to **GROW!** **Everyone make a contact!** Invite someone to Bible Study and Worship this week. ☺

Sunday Nights

We will not have Sunday Evening Service here tonight. Watch the weekly schedule to know when we will meet during the month of January.

Wednesday Night Prayer and Bible Study

We will meet this Wednesday at 6:30 pm. Prayer matters!

Financial Statements are Ready

Linda Dotson, our recording secretary, has prepared the financial statements for 2015. If there are any questions let us know. We will be glad to help.

Food Kitchen

We will serve Monday, February 1, at 5:30 pm. Please feel free to join us as we show the love of Christ and minister to those in need.

Senior Adult
Associational Event
Copeland Baptist Church
February 4, 2016

10:00 am - 1:30 pm

- ♦ 10:00 am... Call to order, Group singing, etc.
- ♦ 10:55 am... Introduction of Special Project, Special Music
- ♦ 11:15 am... Inspirational Message by Host Pastor James Kerns
- ♦ 12:00 pm... Special Feature "Happy Trails" by Leroy Bush (*A Look Back at the movie cowboys who left hoof prints on your imagination.*)
- ♦ 12:30 pm... Carry-In Lunch

Mission Trip Meeting

3:00 pm

here at the church

We will be discussing the possibilities for our summer Youth and Adult Mission Trip. Plan to come and hear what may be in store for our mission this summer.

For the Record-

Attendance: January 17, 2016

(Activities were cancelled due to weather.)

Wednesday Night (1/20/16).....16

Attendance: January 24, 2016

Sunday School.....52

Visitors..... 2

Total..... 54

Contacts Made..... 7

Morning Worship..... 66

Children's Worship 17

Business Meeting..... 30

Sunday Night N/A

Wednesday Night 18

Financial Record:

Weekly Budget..... \$ 2,040.52

Offering Received... \$ 2,623.78

Our Nation and Leaders
Our Military Service people
Today's Prayer Requests ...

Our Nation and our Leaders ...

Five More New Families...
