



Important Questions Part 1: Do You Really Believe the Bible? CRCC Bible Study, Thursday June 1, 2017

Good evening!

As we embark upon a Summer of increased study, I'd like to share a bit with you concerning my motives. Back in March, I awoke early one morning with what I felt was a strongly impressed Word from the Lord. I wrote it down. Out of that time with the Lord came a few adjustments I feel we are called to. Among them was a bit more time of teaching and fellowship as a body, and a return to our zeal in evangelism and family worship and discipleship.

In order to facilitate the type of zeal and victory I felt the Lord was calling us to, for the first month I feel we need to answer a few questions as a church. Hopefully, this will be a time of encouragement and affirmation for CRCC. May we nevertheless prepare for God's direction, correction, and hopefully, affections!

The questions are:

1. Do you really believe the Bible?
 2. Do you really believe the Church (not just ours) is fighting a spiritual war?
 3. Do you truly embrace the nature of salvation, both how one is saved and the call to live holy?
 4. Do you really embrace the centrality of the home and the order of God?
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Do You Really Believe the Bible?

Over time, I've come to see there are at least *Three Views of Scripture* held by those in the Church: Scripture is...

1. Neither Authoritative NOR Binding (Binding meaning mandatory and must be obeyed). This view says the Bible is not alone in containing truth; Scripture therefore has no special authority to command or conform behavior.
2. Authoritative, but NOT Binding (This view says Scripture IS God's Word, but is subject to culture, circumstances, and personal vision)
3. Authoritative AND Binding (Man does not have the authority to disobey God; all of Scripture is inspired by God!)

The question tonight is: which view do you hold? It is also important for CRCC to know that we preach and lead from the perspective of those firmly in the third group! :)

- In the first, Scripture is seen more like a *conversation* and God more like a *motivational speaker*. This person selects the verses that makes them feel good and rejects laws, precepts and most forms of accountability.
- In the second, Scripture is read more like *medication* and God seen as a *doctor*. This person strongly believes in the power of God to heal, deliver, and set free and stands vigorously on those things. They often love worship as well. But this person, as in the first view, struggles with (if not outright rejects) the Word if it is seen to "limit" them and what they want to accomplish in life. Often, other Scripture is used out of context to invalidate the verses they don't like.

- Finally, one who holds the third view sees Scripture not just as medication but as **regulation**; in this worldview, God is more than a motivator or doctor. He is **King and Judge!** Therefore the King's Word regulates His all of His creation: Home, Church, and State.

This person sees the Word of God like the Psalmist: **Psa 19:7-11** *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*

Texts to consider tonight:

2Ti 3:16-17 *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

- MacDonald - "This is one of the most important verses in the Bible on the subject of inspiration. It teaches that the Scriptures are God-breathed. In a miraculous way, He communicated His word to men and led them to write it down for permanent preservation. What they wrote was the very word of God, inspired and infallible. While it is true that the individual literary style of the writer was not destroyed, it is also true that the very words he used were words given to him by the Holy Spirit. Thus we read in **1Co 2:13**: "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." If this verse says anything at all, it says that the inspired writers used WORDS which the Holy Spirit taught. This is what is meant by *verbal* inspiration. The writers of the Bible did not give their own private interpretation of things, but wrote the message which was given to them by God. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (**2Pe 1:20-21**)."

2Pe 1:16-21 *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. 19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

- Years ago after teaching on this verse, I said that God is calling the church to abandon worldliness and back to Scripture. I said that revival lies on the other side of such obedience, as it always has. The problem is few people want to take that call!
- I love Dr. Baucham's declaration when teaching this verse: "I choose to believe the Bible because it is a reliable collection of historical documents, written by eyewitnesses during

the lifetime of other eyewitnesses. They report supernatural events that took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies, and they claim to be divine rather than human in origin.”

- Scripture is inspired, infallible, inerrant, and sufficient. It has been proven to be true in every way it can be proven.

Manuscript evidence - Even though we don't have the original manuscripts, there are so many copies available (far more copies than any other ancient work), by comparing them we can be sure that the texts have remained pure, 99.5 percent pure for the New Testament (the .5% was spelling errors)! For example, there are 24,000 partial and complete copies of the NT in existence today. They are from different time periods, copied by different people, yet they all maintain their purity. That is the Holy Spirit at work! The Dead Sea Scrolls (discovered in 1947) also served to prove the accuracy of the biblical record.

Archeological evidence - Many scientists have set out to disprove the Bible through archeology. All have failed, and many after seeing the evidence, have become Christians! Every archeological discovery related to the Bible has served to prove, not disprove its claims. The Mormon bible for example has no archeological proof whatsoever. The following examples (there are hundreds more) were counted as false or mythical until proved through archeology:

1. The city of Jericho
2. The book of Daniel (no prior record of King Belshazzar)
3. Historical accuracy of the book of Luke
4. The method of crucifixion
5. A single world language (prior to the tower of Babel)
6. Sodom and Gomorrah, and their destruction

Prophecy – this is probably the strongest evidence for divine authorship. The Bible is the only document in existence that provides over 2,000 fulfilled prophecies to validate its claims. All others have been proven to be false, whereas the Bible has been 100% accurate. There are some 500 prophecies yet to come to pass, and we await them as we await the return of our Lord!

Statistics - Could all the Bible's prophecies have been fulfilled by chance, good guessing, or deceit? Scientists have calculated that the odds of Jesus' fulfillment of just 48 of the 61 known prophecies about Him in this way are 1 in 10^{157} !! By comparison, the number of electrons in the known universe is about 10^{79} ! In other words, it would be impossible. There is only one explanation: the Bible is the Word of the Living God!

Heb 4:12 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

- Since Scripture is divine rather than human in origin, is it so shocking that it convicts us so much at times? It is quick and sharp, correcting us in the deepest and most hidden places.

- Scripture is a mirror that shows us...us. It superimposes our faulty will onto God's and we are undone. It breaks and remakes us.

Mat 4:1-4 *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, **It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.***

- Here, our LORD was quoting Deuteronomy...
- **Deu 8:1-3** *All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers. 2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. 3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.*
- Jesus declared our entire lives must be governed by Scripture! Why do we resist this so? God's Word is better than food! It is our spiritual sustenance!
- What would it mean for you to live by every word that procedeeth out of the mouth of God?

Final thoughts:

- As Christians, we should hunger and thirst for God's Word....

Psa 119:48 *I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.*

Psa 119:127 *Therefore I love your commandments above gold, above fine gold.*

Psa 119:72 *The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.*

Psa 119:111 *Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart.*

Psa 119:14 *In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.*

Psa 119:15 *I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.*

Psa 119:16 *I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.*

- This is the heart of the LORD as well. When the children of Israel declared they would obey all that God had spoken to them, God said: "*Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!*" (Deut 5:29)
- May we truly believe Scripture as a church, and change thereby for the glory of God!

Going Deeper:

"Why I Choose to Believe the Bible" by Voddie Baucham:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOYJkEFauZs&t=25s>

Articles:

<https://carm.org/bible>

<https://carm.org/evidence-biblical-inspiration>

Books:

Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell

Has God Spoken?, Hank Hanegraaff