

Why The Bible Is Unique (Not Just Another Book)

Introduction

- Religions are based on their holy book(s)
 - More than 300 so-called holy books in the world
 - The Christian faith is based on the Bible
 - Is the Bible just another religious book?
- The Bible is the Word of God
- What evidence supports the claim that the Bible is the Word of God?
- **2 Tim. 3: 16-17**, All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.
- Peter explains the process
- **2 Pet. 1:21**, For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- God has revealed His mind and given us His thoughts
- How do we know this? Why do we believe this?
- **Is. 55:8-9**, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- **1 Cor. 2:16**, "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.
- Written by our sovereign God, its author is the Holy Spirit
- This book contains the very voice of the living God
- Bible claims to be God-breathed
- Spirit has brought His testimony into our hearts
- The Bible is inspired, inerrant, infallible, indestructible
- The Bible is authoritative in all matters that it addresses
- The Bible is sufficient, complete and final
- Many sound evidences and convincing proofs that this is God's Word
- We have rational support for this conviction
- Our faith is built on evidence and facts
- Our faith is rational
- Still requires a step of faith, but a reasonable step of faith
- The Bible is like no other book in the world

12 Reasons Why We Believe The Bible is God's Word

- Here are 12 reasons:
 1. Direct Claims of the Bible
 2. Perfect Unity of the Bible
 3. Reliable Transmission of the Bible
 4. Affirmation of the Canonicity of the Bible
 5. Unique Teachings of the Bible

- 6. Historical Accuracy of the Bible
- 7. Scientific Accuracy of the Bible
- 8. Fulfilled Prophecy of the Bible
- 9. Lord's Testimony to the Bible
- 10. Amazing Indestructibility of the Bible
- 11. Ethical Superiority of the Bible
- 12. Supernatural Power of the Bible
- These pillars support our conviction that this is God's Word
- The Bible is God's Special Revelation
- God's Creation is God's General Revelation
- If God is who He says He is, the two must agree

1. Direct Claims of the Bible

- The Bible is authoritative in all matters that it addresses
- The Bible actually claims that it is the Word of God
- The Bible claims to be breathed out by God (God-breathed)
- The authors were not inspired, the text of Scripture was inspired
- Peter explains the process
- **2 Pet. 1:21**, For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- **In the OT** the Bible asserts that God spoke what was written within its pages over 2000 times, e.g.:
 - **Gen. 1:3**, And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.
 - **Mal. 4:3**, And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.
 - Thus says the Lord; the Lord said
 - The word of the Lord came to me saying
 - The precepts of the Lord
 - I will put My words in your mouth, says the Lord
- **In the NT**, equally emphatic verses
 - **1 Th. 4:15**, For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.
 - This is a transcendent message coming from the Lord
 - **1 Cor. 11:23**, For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,
- Comparing NT verses with OT verses
 - What God said in the OT, referred to as "the Scriptures said" in the NT
 - The phrase "Word of God" appears over 40 times in the NT
 - The NT is equated with the OT (the Word of God)
 - **Mark 7:13**, "thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."
 - It is what Jesus taught

- **Luke 5:1**, On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret,
- God's Word claims:
 - Ultimate spiritual authority in doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**)
 - To be inerrant (**Ps. 12:6; 119:140, Prov. 30:5; John 10:35**)
 - To be infallible (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**)
- Scriptures speak with one voice, the voice of God
- When the Bible speaks, God speaks [Augustine and Calvin]
- No other book refers to itself as "The Word of God"

2. Perfect Unity of The Bible

- How do we know the Bible in its totality is God speaking?
- **Heb. 1:1-2**, Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
- The amazing unity of the books of the Bible in the midst of diversity
- 66 different books written over 1500 years
- 40 different authors, written on 3 different continents, 13 countries
- Written in 3 different languages – Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek
- Diversity of the authors: 2 were kings, 3 priests, 1 physician, 2 fishermen, 2 shepherds, 1 a former Pharisee, 2 statesmen, 1 tax collector, 1 military general, 1 scribe, 1 cupbearer, 1 goat herder
- Diversity of its literary genre: narrative, poetry, prophecy, proverb, parable, epistle, allegory, psalms, gospel, legal writing
- Location of writers: Sinai desert, palace in Jerusalem, cave in Judea, beside river of Babylon, Egypt, Macedonia, Greece, Rome, Patmos
- Diversity of its many parts: 3000+ cast members, 1189 chapters, 31,173 verses, 774,746+ words, 3,500,000 letters
- Yet the Bible tells one cohesive story that reveals our Creator's love and plan for a relationship with each of us
- The Bible speaks of 1 plan of salvation, 1 people of God, 1 story of human history, 1 problem of mankind, 1 solution for this problem, 1 standard of morality, 1 design for the family, 1 chief object of its message
- The Bible speaks with 1 voice, never contradicts itself
- How can we account for such unity in the midst of this diversity?
 - One author stands behind the whole book
 - That author has breathed it out – that is God Himself
 - A master architect behind the whole project – one temple of Truth
- Take an example of ten men writing a description of an observed event
 - Would their stories agree with each other?
- The Bible is the word of the living God
- The Bible speaks with one voice on every matter that it addresses

3. Reliable Transmission of the Bible

- More than any other book of antiquity the Bible has been passed on to us with great precision
- Reliability of ancient texts is determined by two factors:
 - The **number of copies** we have of an ancient manuscript
 - The **time span** between when the original manuscript was written and the date of the earliest copy that we have of it
- Until the 20th century the oldest known OT manuscript was dated to the 10th century AD, a time gap from when the original document was written of about 1400 years
- Discovery of the **Dead Sea Scrolls** in 1947 by a shepherd boy when he tossed a stone into a cave – heard a thud inside the cave
- He investigated and found some scrolls with writing on them
- Subsequently archaeologists found scrolls in 11 different caves
- Found multiple copies of books and fragments of books of the Bible
- 2 copies of Isaiah, entire copy of the Psalms, 1 copy of Leviticus, thousands of fragments of books of the OT (all except Esther)
- Oldest OT manuscript **1000+ years earlier** than before (~ 100-200 BC)
- **Skeptics proven wrong** - Isaiah written in 700 BC, not in first century AD
- Affirmed the accuracy of the transmission of the books of the OT
- No other book of antiquity passed down to us so carefully
- The NT is also very accurately preserved
- 6000 copies of early Greek manuscripts of the NT
- 10,000 copies of the Latin Vulgate manuscripts
- **25,000+ NT manuscripts**
 - Multiple copies in other Syriac and other Semitic languages
- Compare this with other ancient books written at the same time
 - Homer lived 900 BC – time gap between what Homer wrote (600 copies) and the earliest copy of his manuscript is about 500 years
 - For Plato, the time gap is about 1300 years
 - For Caesar (10 copies) the time gap is about 1000 years
- The books of the NT were written from 48 AD to 95 AD
- Earliest fragment of the NT (some verses in John) dated to about 125 AD
 - Time gap of about 35 years from when the Gospel of John was written
- A copy of another book of the NT dated to about 250 AD
- The earliest copy of the whole NT is about 200 years after the books of the NT were written
- NT textual scholars concluded that:
 - 99.99 % of the original writings have been reclaimed
 - Nothing in the other 0.01% substantially affect any Christian doctrine
- This gives us unsurpassed confidence in the accuracy of the Word of God
- No other ancient book with this accuracy

4. Affirmation of the Canonicity of the Bible

- OT canonized in 300 BC
 - 3 divisions – law, prophets, writings
 - Same 39 books as today's Bible
 - Septuagint (Greek translation of OT) in 250-150 BC
- NT canonized in 375 AD
 - NT books in use by early church fathers
 - Same 27 books as today's Bible
- How were the books of the Bible recognized as canon?
 - Was the book written by a prophet of God?
 - Was the writer confirmed by the acts of God?
 - Did the message tell the truth about God?
 - Does it come with the power of God?
 - Was it accepted by the people of God?
- God cannot lie, **Heb. 6:18**, “ ... it is impossible for God to lie ... “
- Jesus affirmed the Old Testament
- **Matt 5:17-18**, “ ... I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ... “
- **Luke 24:44**, Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."
- **Matt. 23:35**, ... from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, ... [*first and last OT martyrs*]
- Hebrew Apocryphal books not accepted into the canon of Scripture
 - Never quoted by Jesus or the NT writers
 - Never quoted as Scripture by Philo or Josephus
- The Canon of Scripture is closed:
 - **Deut. 4:2**, You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you.
 - **Prov. 30:6**, Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.
 - **Rev. 22:18-19**, I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

5. Unique Teachings of the Bible

- Contains 1000+ prophecies, **more than half of them already fulfilled**
 - No other religious book compares
- Covers 5 centuries of the history of (the chosen nation of) Israel in books of Samuel, Kings, Chronicles
 - History confirmed by **archaeology** and extra-biblical writings

- Addresses **scientific matters** accurately, as well as **spiritual matters**, history, geography, and prophecy
 - Some future scientific discoveries anticipated
- Records **sins of its characters** (e.g. Patriarchs, Kings, and Apostles) that reflect badly on God's leaders and chosen people
 - Sins of the patriarchs
 - **Gen. 12:11-13**, When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake."
 - Sins of the people
 - **Deut. 9:24**, You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.
 - King David's adultery with Bathsheba
 - **2 Sam. 11:26,27**, When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband. And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD.
 - Gospel writers point out faults of the Apostles
 - **Matt. 8:10-26**, And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.
 - Disorder within the church is exposed
 - **1 Cor. 1:11**, For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers.
- The people of the Bible are real, no sugar coating

6. Historical Accuracy of the Bible

- Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts written by Dr. Luke
 - Used reports by **eyewitnesses** and **prophets**
- FF Bruce wrote "The NT Documents – Are They Reliable?"
 - Luke names 32 countries, 54 cities, 9 islands
 - History and geography documented in his writings are confirmed by archaeology and extra-biblical writings
 - Luke is familiar with all of the proper titles of Roman officials mentioned in the gospel and the history recorded in Acts
 - Titles of Roman officials are perfectly accurate
 - Original Roman leaders' titles being changed

- Luke records their titles exactly right
- Never an error historically
- **Ebla tablets** found in northern Syria in 1974
 - Records of times 1000 years before Moses
 - Mentions 5000+ cities, places, nations, including 5 cities of the plains (Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, Zoar)
 - **Gen. 14:2**, These kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).
 - **Skeptics proven wrong** again on 5 cities of the plains
 - Confirmed the places, nations, cities named in the OT
- **Skeptics** said that Moses could not have written the first five books of the Bible because Moses could not even write in his day
 - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
 - Confirmed that Moses could write first 5 books of the Bible
 - Postal system working at that time
- Pool of Bethesda – buried in the sand of time – discovered
 - **John 5:2**, Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.
- Archaeologists do not find mistakes in the Bible
 - Confirm history recorded in the Bible
 - Today archaeologists use the Bible as a guide
- No book in antiquity has the historical accuracy of the Bible
- The Bible is correct again, and always is

7. Scientific Accuracy of the Bible

- We would expect that every matter that God addresses in the Bible be accurately described
- The Bible is not a book of science, but does make scientific statements
- Herbert Spencer in 1903 stated that everything in the universe fits into **one of five categories** – matter, space, time, force, action
- **Gen. 1:1**, In the beginning (time) God (force) created (action) the heavens (space) and the earth (matter).
- God is assumed; proof of God is not necessary
- The very first verse of the Bible is scientifically accurate
- Moses, trained in Egyptian wisdom/mythology, got it exactly right
- Number of stars in the heavens declared to be uncountable in the Bible
- In ~ 150 BC Hipparchus counted the stars in the universe to be 1022
- In ~ 200 AD Ptolemy counted 1056 stars
- In ~ 1600 AD Kepler counted 1005 stars
- In 1610 Galileo invented the telescope and saw an inestimable number of stars in the universe

- Today we know that there are about 100 billion galaxies, each having about 100 billion stars -> 10^{22} stars (~ the same order of magnitude as the number of grains of sand)
- What does the Bible say?
- **Jer. 33:22**, As the host of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the offspring of David my servant, and the Levitical priests who minister to me.
- The Bible is true in all matters that it addresses
- Reliability of the Bible established by (extra-biblical) history, geography, archaeology, prophecy
- We trust the Bible for spiritual truth
- Do we trust it for truth in other areas? e.g scientific disciplines?
- Biblical references to astronomy, geophysics, geology, hydrology, meteorology, oceanography, physics, biology: accurate statements, in some cases anticipated scientific discoveries of the last few 100 years
- **Is. 40:22**, It is He who sits above the circle of the earth. ...
 - Earth as a sphere – written 2700 years ago
- **Job 26:7**, He stretches out the north over the void and hangs the earth on nothing.
 - Earth suspended in space – written about 4000 years ago
 - Early people thought that the earth rested on shoulders of Atlas
 - Early myths – earth rested on a turtle or an elephant
- **Job 38:14**, It is changed like clay under the seal, and its features stand out like a garment.
 - Earth is spinning on its axis rotating around the sun (heliocentric)
 - Sun is circling in the Milky Way
- **Eccl 1:7**, All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again.
 - Hydrologic cycle recorded long before being discovered by scientists
 - Ocean -> evaporation -> clouds -> rain -> river -> ocean
- **Lev. 17:11**, For the life of the flesh is in the blood, ...
 - Blood circulation – life is in the blood
 - George Washington was bled to death to get diseased blood out
- These scientific statements are accurate
- The Laws of science are consistent with the Bible
- Scientific disciplines established largely by Bible-believing scientists
 - Kepler, Pasteur, Newton, Linnaeus, Kelvin (Thermodynamics)
- Why do we not read scientific myths in the Bible? Inspired Word of God
- **Evolution is NOT science**; it is a philosophy/worldview

8. Fulfilled Prophecy of the Bible

- 27% of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written
- Prophecy is prewritten history known only to God

- God knows the future – He has foreordained everything
- The Bible contains 1000+ prophecies – > 500+ already fulfilled
- There are about 300 prophecies about the Messiah in the OT - Isaiah, Psalms, Micah, Malachi, Genesis, etc.
- 109 of these are fulfilled in Jesus Christ's First Coming (birth)
 - e.g. birth place, born of a virgin, in line of David, garments divided
 - Born in Bethlehem, **Mic. 5:2**
 - Called Immanuel
 - Called out of Egypt
 - Preceded by a forerunner
 - Anointed with the Holy Spirit
 - Enter into his public ministry in Galilee
 - Working miracles
 - Entering into Jerusalem on a donkey
 - Rejected by his own Jewish brethren
 - Betrayed by a friend
 - Sold for 30 pieces of silver, **Zech. 11:12**
 - Forsaken by God
 - Gall and vinegar offered to him
 - Die but no bone broken
 - Numbered among the transgressors
 - **Ps. 22:18**, "They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."
 - Buried with the rich
 - Raised from the dead
 - Ascend back to the right hand of God the Father
 - All recorded long before Jesus entered this world
 - Most of these prophecies fulfilled by His enemies, not by His friends
- Probability of all these prophecies being fulfilled in one man is so small
 - e.g. cover Texas with 2 feet of silver dollars, mark one, find that one
- The others are yet to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ's Second Coming
- The Bible also has many predictions about kings, nations, and cities
 - Many of these have already been fulfilled
 - Abraham would have a son
 - The fall of Babylon was foretold, **Jer. 50-51**
 - The destruction of Tyre in **Ezek. 26** – 7 specific prophecies fulfilled
 - **Is. 44:28**, Cyrus predicted as a ruler 100 years beforehand
 - Cyrus would be a ruler one hundred years later, **Is. 45:1**
 - Can we name future presidents of the US?
- The Bible has many predictions about the Jewish people, the Israelites
 - Some of these have already been fulfilled
 - e.g. dispersion (**Deut. 28:64**) and regathering of Israel (**Is. 11:11-12**)
- What is the probability that these prophecies came to pass by chance?
ZERO/NIL/NADA

- The reliability of the Bible is confirmed by the accuracy of its prophecies
 - 500+ of the 1000+ prophecies have already been fulfilled
- **Is. 61:1-2** (Proclaim the favorable year of the Lord + day of vengeance); **Luke 4:18-19a** (Proclaim favorable year of the Lord); **Dead Sea Scrolls**.

9. Lord's Testimony To The Bible

- Jesus was the greatest man that ever lived on the planet
- Son of God, Son of Man
- Jesus' teachings are the sole authority for all manners of faith and conduct
- What does Jesus have to say about the Bible
- **Matt. 4:4**, But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"
 - Jesus quotes **Deut. 8:3**, ... that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.
 - Jesus affirmed the inerrancy and the inspiration of every word that comes out of the mouth of God
- **Matt. 5:18**, For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.
 - Claims inerrancy for each letter (not just each word) in the Bible
 - **Luke 16:17**, But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.
 - **John 17:17**, Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.
- Four stories in the OT that are most often ridiculed by skeptics
 - Adam and Eve were literal people **Mark 10:6**
 - There was a real man named Noah and there was a worldwide Flood
 - Sodom and Gomorrah were totally destroyed by fire
 - Jonah was swallowed by a great fish **Matt. 12:40**
- Jesus affirmed all four stories in literal fashion
 - Jesus said that His second coming would be like the days of Noah
 - The final judgment will be like that which fell on Sodom and Gomorrah
 - Jesus spoke of the permanency of marriage and of Adam and Eve and the two becoming one
 - Jesus spoke of His own resurrection as a sign Jonah being 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the fish; so shall the Son of Man be in the earth
- **Matt. 12:40**, For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
- Jesus affirmed His resurrection, His Second Coming, and the final judgment in referring to the most controversial stories in the OT
- Jesus was not explaining away the Bible; He was building on the solid rock of the revelation of Scripture

- **John 10:35**, If he called them gods to whom the word of God came--and Scripture cannot be broken--
- **Luke 18:31**, And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.
- **Matt. 26:24**, The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, ...
- **Luke 11:51**, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation.
 - Affirmed all 39 books of the OT; put bookends around the OT
- In **John 16** Jesus guarantees that His deeds and words will also be recorded and regarded as Scripture.

10. Amazing Indestructibility of the Bible

- **Is. 40:8**, The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.
- Atheists have assaulted it; philosophers have denounced it
- Infidels have mocked it; critics have assailed it
- Satan attacked God's Word starting in **Gen. 3:1-7**
- Over the years, kings have banned God's Word; emperors have forbid it
- King Jehoiakim tried to destroy God's Word, **Jer. 36:23**
- Satan distorted Scripture in his encounter with Christ, **Matt. 4:6,7**
- Roman emperor Diocletian ordered every Bible burned in 300 AD
- Roman emperor Constantine ordered 50 copies made in 325 AD
- French skeptic Voltaire, influenced by the agnostic John Locke, said that 100 years from his day (died in 1778) the Bible would no longer be available except as an antiquated book in a museum
- Geneva Bible Society bought Voltaire's house 50 years after his death
 - They began to print the Bible in this house
- In 1933, 200 years later, \$510K paid for an ancient copy of the Bible; the first edition of Voltaire's book sold on the streets of Paris for 11 cents
- The Word of God is indestructible
- **Ps. 119:89**, Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.
- This is the book of the ages, not just the book of the year, month or day
- This book is indestructible, imperishable, inexhaustible, unquenchable, uncontainable
- **Mark. 13:31**, Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.
- God's Word still stands today
 - First book printed by the printing press in 1456 AD
 - 2500+ translations
 - More than 200 million copies of the Bible printed each year
 - No other book comes close

- Oldest preserved Bible is Codex Vaticanus written before 350 AD, preserved in the Vatican Museum in Rome
- Oldest preserved fragment of a Bible text is 2600 years old, two small silver scrolls found in Jerusalem in 1979

11. Ethical Superiority of the Bible

- Recorded transcendent moral code
- Superior moral ethic that surpasses anything else written
- Pagan religions known for their desecration of morality
- Ten commandments are unique – love God, love your neighbor
- **Ex. 20:1-17**, ... “You shall have no other gods before me. ... “
- Don’t read “go kill the infidel” in this book, but we read “love your enemy”, “love your wife”, “love your children”
- This book teaches:
 - Sanctity of human life
 - Racial equality
 - Dignity of women
 - Good citizenship
 - Social justice
 - Selfless service
 - Personal integrity
 - Hard Work
- Everything that is right and decent and honorable
- The law is written on our hearts

12. Supernatural Power of the Bible

- Our faith is well placed in this book
- The proof is in the pudding
- This book saves, sanctifies, separates, purifies, convicts, prunes, comforts, guides
- **Ps. 19:7-8**, The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;
- This book is a mirror that gives us self-knowledge and shows us for who we are and what we are:
 - Seed that contains the germ of life
 - Lamp unto our feet; a light unto our path
 - Hammer that breaks the locks to pieces
 - Fire that is in our bones
 - Sharp edged sword that pierces our soul
 - Milk that feeds the heart
 - Meat that substantiates our faith

- No other book can tell me:
 - Who I am, where I come from, where I am going
 - How to be right with God
 - How to live the abundant life
 - To look beyond the grave and tell me where I'm going
 - About myself and makes the right diagnosis of my spiritual condition
- Reading this book makes something happen inside of us
- I've read other books – this book reads me
- The Word of God
 - Transforms drunkards into those who are sober
 - Transforms prostitutes into those who are pure
 - The broken are made whole
 - The prideful are made humble
 - The weak are made strong
 - The fearful are made courageous
- Martin Luther said "this book speaks to me; it lays hold of me"
- **This book contains the mind of God ...**
- God is holy; an enormous gap between holy God and sinful man
- One way of salvation; salvation in no other name
- **John 14:6**, Jesus said to him, "I am the **way**, and the **truth**, and the **life**. No one comes to the Father except through me."
- One God, one mediator, between God and man
- **1 Th. 2:13**, And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

The Bible is Unique

- Inspired, inerrant, infallible, authoritative, immutable, unchanging, sufficient, sovereign ...
- Coherent unified history
- Presents people with their warts
- Book of spiritual truth
- Accurately copied over time
- Confirmed by prophecy, history, geography, archaeology
- True scientific statements
- **This book is the Word of God – not just another book**
- **No other religious book matches The Bible**

END NOTES

The Bible is the Basis of our faith

- For believers - strengthened in The Faith
- For skeptics - challenge to what they believe to be true

Test of a true prophet

- **Deut. 18:18-23**, false prophecy does not agree with God's Word

Nostradamus, 16th century "prophet"

- Many false prophecies
- Vague and general
- No one prophecy proven
- Prophecies in other "religious" books
- Not one true prophecy in them - Buddha, Confucius, Hindu Veda, Bhagavad Gita, Book of Mormon, other Mormon books, Koran

Mormon Journal of Discourse

- Smith and Young
- Inhabitants on moon/sun,
- Live to 1000 years, 6 feet tall, dressed like Quakers
- Predicted that Brigham Young would be President of the US

Jehovah's Witnesses

- Russell (Founder) predicted that Christ would return in 1914, 1916, 1918
- Rutherford predicted that Christ would return in 1925, 1946
- Many other false prophecies

Bible Prophecies

- 27% of Bible; 31,000 verses
- City of Tyre, Cyrus named as a ruler 100 years before
- Jewish dispersion and re-gathering
- More than 500 of 1000+ prophecies fulfilled

Answers to Skeptics

- The Bible is not a myth
- **Gen. 1 & 2** agree; **Gen. 2** focuses on the Creation of man
- Isaiah prophecies true and fulfilled - confirmed by Dead Sea Scrolls
- Sodom and Gomorrah confirmed by Ebla tablets
- Moses could write - confirmed by Ebla tablets
- True scientific statements - some discovered in last few 100's of years
- Faith is evidence based

Evidence for Biblical truth claims

- Bible is the **Word of God** - special Revelation
- Creation is the **Work of God** - general Revelation
- The two must agree - if God is who He says He is
- Shown many sound evidences and convincing proofs

Do we take the Bible as Truth?

- Authoritative and sufficient

- Be a Berean, Acts 17
- Live like you do, obey His Word
- Be an ambassador

Do you have questions about the Bible?

- Ask a mature believer
- Search for answer in Bible and online
- Investigate the answer yourself
- The most important question you can ask for your eternal destiny!

The Bible is inerrant, sufficient

- Authoritative in all matters that it addresses
- The Bible is complete, final, infallible
- Sufficient for our needs
- Will accomplish what it promises
- Provides the assurance of our salvation

THE BIBLE

- This book contains: the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.
- Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy.
- It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here heaven is open, and the gates of hell are disclosed.
- Christ is the grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.
- Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, health to the soul, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you here in this life, will be opened at the judgment, and is established forever.
- It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its contents.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO STUDY THE BIBLE?

Why is God's Word so important? Because it contains God's mind and will for your life (**2 Tim. 3:16, 17**). It is the only source of absolute divine authority for you as a servant of Jesus Christ.

- *It is infallible in its totality:* "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (**Ps. 19:7**).
- *It is inerrant in its parts:* "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar" (**Prov. 30:5, 6**).
- *It is complete:* "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (**Rev. 22:18, 19**).
- *It is authoritative and final:* "Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven" (**Ps. 119:89**).
- *It is totally sufficient for your needs:* ". . . that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (**2 Tim. 3:16, 17**).
- *It will accomplish what it promises:* "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (**Is. 55:11**).
- *It provides the assurance of your salvation:* "He who is of God hears God's words..." (**John 8:47; 20:31**).