

“Why I Believe in Scripture”

Message 3 of 5 in the Sermon Series “Key Questions: God, Creation, Scripture, Jesus, the Resurrection”

Acts 17:26-28; Luke 24:44 | Pastor Mike Evans

Hebrews 11:1; 6—“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen...⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

“There cannot be irrefutable proof for the existence of God, (though) many people have found strong clues for his reality—divine fingerprints—in many places.”

Tim Keller, *The Reason for God* [Riverhead: NYC, 2008]. p. 132

Today’s Goal: To walk away with great confidence that this is God’s word and that his divine fingerprints are all over it.

Acts 17:26-28 ²⁶From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’”

Paul to the Athenians: Right pursuit, wrong object.

Truth #1: The Bible is Unique.

Truth #2: The Bible is Trustworthy. What they wrote is what you are reading!

Writing	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span of Earliest Copy	Number of Copies
Homer’s Iliad	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 years	643
New Testament	40-100 A.D.	125 A.D.	25 years	24,000

“No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading.”

Sir Frederick Kenyon, New Testament textual criticism expert,
cited in Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, p. 45

“A careful study of the variants (different readings) of the various earliest manuscripts reveals that none of them affects a single doctrine of Scripture. The system of spiritual truth contained in the standard Hebrew text of the Old Testament is not in the slightest altered or compromised by any of the variant readings found in the Hebrew manuscripts of earlier date found in the Dead Sea caves or anywhere else.”

Gleason Archer, Bible scholar and biblical languages expert.
cited in Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, p. 45

BOTTOM LINE:

The Bible is unique. It's trustworthy. It's complete. And it's historically reliable.

Truth #3: The Whole Bible points to Jesus.

- The Bible is God's special revelation to humanity.
- Tells who we are (identity), why we're here (purpose), where we're going (destiny).
- The Bible tells us of our sin and of God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ.
- Doesn't answer all our curiosities. If we needed to know it, the Scripture would have addressed it.

The Old Testament

Key Things to Understand:

- 77% of the Bible is found in the Old Testament.
- OT history is religious history, redemptive history, and is therefore selective history.
- OT history has been and continues to be confirmed archaeologically. You can trust what you read!

“There can be no doubt that archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of Old Testament tradition.”

William Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, p. 176
[The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Maryland, USA; 1968]

- The OT points to a coming Messiah who would deliver the people.
- If you are a Christian, the OT is your spiritual history.

“²⁹If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

– Galatians 3:29

- Jesus gave us a quick outline of the OT in Luke 24:44:

“⁴⁴He said to them, ‘This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.’”

The New Testament

The Gospels:

- Reveal Jesus as the Messianic King.
- Bring about God’s Kingdom on earth.
- Jesus forgives sinful people through his (substitutionary) life, death, and resurrection

Without Jesus there is:

- NO salvation
- NO forgiveness of sins
- NO reconciliation with the Father

The Rest of the New Testament:

- Acts – How the Early Church Began and Grew
- Paul’s Letters to Churches
- Paul’s Letters to Friends
- General Letters
- Revelation – how Jesus will Return!

Closing Question: What are you going to do with the Bible?