



Step Three: Being Ready

Studying to Give a Thoughtful Answer

to the Disciple, the Skeptic, and the Scoffer

Disciples: _____ of Christ who are looking to learn

1 Thessalonians 2:13 – “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe”

Skeptics: unconvinced, confused, _____

*It's true we don't have the original parchments of the Bible, but consider this: if the original and preserved unit of measure known as a "yard" was lost in a fire in its holding place in Washington, D.C., there is little doubt that that measurement could be replaced with **full assurance** through all the exact copies of it that exist elsewhere. The same is true of God's Word.*

The heroic integrity of the authors of the Bible, and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd century Christians (whose copies of the Bible we DO have!) clearly show their seriousness in passing along accurate copies of the Bible.

Experiences with God are great and important, but if the True God wants us to know Him, we need a more reliable guide than personal experience. We can't just put our feet in the ocean and then sail to Hawaii. We need a map! God has given us that written 'map' in the Bible.

Scoffers: mocking, uninterested, _____

*I know it seems crazy to believe in a book filled with miracles and Jesus rising from the dead. Those are crazy sounding things. But it seems clear to me that **something** miraculous happened in the 1st century with Jesus that changed the lives of all those people... and it's changed my life too.*



Step Four: Shine as a Light

Living out an Answer with our Lives

If we believe the Bible is truly God's Word...

→ We should _____ the Bible and put it into _____!

James 1:22-25 – “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves... But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

Matthew 5:16 – “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”



Ready to Give an Answer

Answering the tough questions with our words and with our lives

Part 2: “How Did We Get the Bible?”

The Text: 2nd Peter 1:16-21

1:16-18 – The Testimony & _____ of the _____

The Transfiguration: **Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36**

Acts 4:13-22 – “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus... Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”

1:19 - Something Even MORE _____ than Personal Experience!

“More Sure” = *bebaios* = Steadfast, sure, firm, stable, trusty

1 Corinthians 13:12 – “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

1:20-21 – The True _____ of the Bible: The Holy Spirit

“Moved” = *pherō* = carried, conveyed like a ship by wind

Want to learn more?



“Growing in Grace: The Trustworthiness of the Bible”
Preached: 10/6/2024



“Core Christianity: The Authority of the Scriptures”
Preached: 05/19/2024



Step One: Understanding *Honestly Considering the Hard Questions*

- ➔ Wasn't the Bible put together 100s of years _____ Christ died?
 - It's true that our earliest copies of a 'complete Bible' date back to 300s AD
- ➔ What about the _____ books that got left out of the Bible?
 - It's true that there are some other ancient books that claim to be written by an Apostle or contemporary of Jesus.
- ➔ Hasn't the Bible been changed / corrupted over _____?
 - It's true that we don't have any of the original copies of the New Testament



Step Two: Strengthened Belief *Being Thoughtful About What We Believe*

Faith ~ Reason ~ Experience

Faith: A _____ trust in the _____ of Jesus and the Bible

It's reasonable to trust in Jesus: and He _____ the Bible!

Matthew 5:18 – “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot (*iōta* = *smallest letter*) or one tittle (*keriaia* = *accent mark*) shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

Luke 21:33 – “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.”

It's reasonable to trust the Bible: it's an _____ book!

- ❖ **The Bible's construction is an unprecedented _____**
it is 66 individual books, written on 3 continents, in 3 different languages, over approximately 1,500 years, by more than 40 authors who came from many walks of life... and yet the Bible remains one unified book from beginning to end without contradiction! The human writers are clearly not the actual author!
- ❖ **The Bible is filled with specific, detailed, and accurate _____**
There is no other religious book like this! Only an author outside of time can explain the extent and detail of the prophecies.
- ❖ **The Bible continues to transcend _____ in its message and impact**
2,000 years later, lives continue to be dramatically transformed

Reason: consider the _____ and _____

Evidence:

- ✓ The ancient Jewish people were _____ careful and precise in recording the 'Torah' (Old Testament) Scriptures. The 'Dead Sea Scrolls' validate the miraculous precision of their work. By Jesus' day, there was universal agreement on the 304,805 **letters** of the Torah!
- ✓ By _____ AD (while the Apostle John was still alive!) other Christians (like Clement) were already quoting the books of the Bible as God-breathed 'Scripture'
- ✓ By _____ AD we have the 'Muratorian Fragment' and the writing of Irenaeus of Lyon that show the early Christian churches regraded all 4 Gospels, Acts, all of Paul's and John's Letters, and Jude and Revelation as divinely inspired Holy Scripture.
- ✓ In _____ AD, a council of churches met in Nicaea to affirm the Bible, and to denounce 'false gospels' – like the Gospel of Thomas - proved to be a forgery (not written by Thomas).
- ✓ We currently have _____ Greek, 10,000 Latin, and 9,000 miscellaneous ancient copies of the New Testament from across Europe, Asia, and Africa - they all show the same books and same words!

Logic:

- ✓ The early Christians gave their _____ for the Gospel of Jesus Christ... clearly they were motivated to know if the writing were authentic or not! They displayed heroic integrity in their efforts.
- ✓ If God is going to communicate with humans, _____ He can work through His people to write and preserve the message!

Experience: finding it to be _____ in our own lives

- ➔ In hospital rooms, the **Psalms** have given me deep comfort
- ➔ In navigating life, the **Proverbs** have given me invaluable and practical wisdom for every decision
- ➔ In making sense of the world around me, **Genesis** has proved exactly right
- ➔ In my marriage and raising kids, the **Epistles** have given me relationship-saving wisdom and admonition and correction.
- ➔ In finding a living hope – the **words of Jesus** vibrate in my whole soul