

Week 5 Can The Bible Be Trusted?

March 21



Hey Creek family,

Traditionally, Christians have taught that the Bible is God's Word. This means that it is inspired by God and trusted to have authority in the lives of those who believe.

One thing that causes a lot of people to scratch their heads whenever they think about the trustworthiness of the Bible, however, is when they look at how the Bible came to be. They see that it is a collection of writings from many different authors, written in multiple ancient languages, and compiled and passed down over the course of thousands of years. Rather than God sending down the Bible as we have it today, this book was written by humans, over time, through God's inspiration by the Holy Spirit.

I remember learning about this process and it was difficult for me to reconcile. I had always viewed the Bible as the perfect word of God. I knew, in my mind, that people had written it, but I thought of it as God dictating it to the writers or eyewitnesses writing down events immediately after they happened.

I had taken the Bible to be trustworthy my whole life because that is what I was taught in church, but I never thought about how the Bible actually came to be. As I learned how the Bible came to be, my faith was honestly shaken.

How can I trust the Bible if there is so much human margin for error in how events were recorded and potential errors in the handwritten copies of manuscripts? How can I trust that what we read in our English translations of the Bible are true to the original languages that the Bible was written in? I had lots of doubts about the Bible. Fortunately, God is not scared of our doubts.

So, amidst the doubt, I knew that I had come to some conclusions because my view of the Bible is foundational to my faith. If we value Scripture as a church and as individuals, we must view it as trustworthy.

What has helped me to reconcile the doubts I have about the Bible is my view on Jesus. I have decided to believe that Jesus is who he said he was. If I believe in Jesus, then I will take his view on Scripture as authoritative. I believe this because the accounts of Jesus we have are considered very reliable for that period in history. We have records of the teachings, ministry, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. People who followed him for the three years of his ministry saw him die, then, had encounters with the Risen Jesus. They either wrote down their story or told what they saw and heard to others who recorded it. There is even a historical record of Jesus in writings outside of the Bible. If I believe Jesus was who he said he was, then I have to consider how Jesus views and talks about Scripture (for Jesus, this was just what we call the Old Testament). Jesus references Scripture consistently and talks about it as if it has authority from God. At the end of the day, I believe the Bible is trustworthy primarily because Jesus viewed it in that way.

I don't know what your view of the Bible is or if you have ever really considered how this book came to be, but it warrants our attention, **especially if you have doubts**. If we doubt something, we are more likely to ignore parts we don't agree with or altogether discount the entire book. Below are some daily reflection questions and resources that can help you think about the Bible and why it can be trusted as authoritative.

Daily Reflection

As you think through this topic, here are some daily questions for you to reflect and pray about. I encourage you to write down your answers and share with your life group.

Monday- How do you view the Bible?

Tuesday- What questions or doubts do you have about the Bible?

Wednesday- How does your trust in the Bible affect your faith?

Thursday- What are some ways you can process or find answers to your questions or doubts?

Friday- What would you say to someone who expresses doubt or skepticism about the Bible?

Here are some resources I've found helpful:

1. Scripture – What does the Bible say about itself? **2 Timothy 3:16-17; Matthew 4:4, John 17:17; Psalm 12:6; Psalm 119: 96; Isaiah 55:10-11** are from different writers in the Old and New Testaments who discuss the authority and power of Scripture. These are just some passages within the Bible.
2. Here's an article by Dr. Kenneth Boa discussing the evidence to support the Bible's trustworthiness: "How Accurate is the Bible" by Dr. Kenneth Boa (https://www.cslewisinstitute.org/webfm_send/410)
3. This is a clip from a conversation between Tim Keller and Martin Bashir at Columbia University on the reliability of the Bible: Why is the Bible reliable? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZAPFKXMy_Y) (If you're interested, here is the full conversation → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L9jHlrMRJAo>)
4. Here's a short video from the Gospel Coalition on how to approach people who have issues with the reliability of Scripture: How do I respond to someone who rejects

Scripture as a trustworthy source? (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/podcasts/q-a-podcast/how-do-i-respond-to-someone-who-rejects-scripture-as-a-trustworthy-source/>)

I hope that you are able to express any doubts you have about the Bible to loving Christian people, preferably in your life group. May you be met with love and understanding as you walk together to grow in your faith and love for Jesus. God is not afraid of our doubts and we should welcome honest discussion about doubt. My prayer is that this community builds each other up and connects one another to Jesus at an even deeper level.

Sincerely,
Jake