



DISCIPLE DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Biblical studies 1: Bibliology “Why you can trust the Bible as God’s Word”

Teacher: Professor Russ Glessner

What about Bible Contradictions?

Week 2 || January 14th, 2024

I. Challenges in Reading the Bible—Contradictions?

Samples: Gospels, Acts 7, numbers, quotes, theology, ethics, Sam/Kings vs Chron, Eph 4

II. God’s Word, the Bible, is Holy and Wholly True!

“In the beginning God . . .” The Bible is God-breathed. Psalm 119:60 & John 17:17

Witnesses: Moses, David, Isaiah, Peter, John, Paul, and Jesus:

“I am the Truth” and “Your Word is Truth”

What is truth? How important is accuracy? [Roger Nicole and Sidney Harris column]

“The full Bible concept of truth involves factuality, faithfulness, and completeness.”

Guidelines:

Read the Bible carefully—details matter.

The Bible is literature—read paragraphs.

Love God and think as you read the Bible.

Read the Bible to worship and obey God.

III. Followers of Christ must be Kind, Patient, and Gentle!

“And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness” (2 Tim 2.24-25).

We are not to focus upon answering objections, since our primary goal is to answer people! Pray briefly. Listen carefully. Discuss reasonably. Respond honestly. Part thankfully.

IV. Responses to the Challenges of Contradictions!

There are solutions to the challenges which face the Bible reader. There are times when we need to wait with faith that God and his Word are completely true.

V. What Would Jesus Do [and Say]?

Jesus was challenged with apparent contradictions. This is what he said and did. [Matt 22]

Taxes and duties: God and Caesar // Sadducees and the Resurrection

Primary Commandments // Question about the Messiah as Son of David

Challenge: Read Scripture with full confidence that it is God’s Message through the Holy Spirit for us. Trust in Jesus Christ completely, for eternal life, holy living, and with assurance that the Bible is Truth.

Helps: Gleason Archer, Jr. The New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties. Norman L. Geisler & Thomas Howe. The Big Book of Bible Difficulties: Clear and Concise Answers from Genesis to Revelation.

Recognition

God’s Holy Spirit authenticates His Word with His people.

Scripture

Num 12:6-8; Neh 8:1-3; John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Thess 1:4-5; 2:13

Definition and Concepts

God's people, in the community of faith and enabled by the God's Spirit, recognized certain writings as the Word of God. Normally, these were written by prophets, apostles, or those closely associated with them. This relates to spoken prophecy, as well.

Canonization

God’s Writings are authoritative; His people in community recognize the writings of prophets & apostles as uniquely inspired and gather and keep them.

Scripture

Nehemiah 8:1-3; Luke 24:44; Col 4.16; 2 Peter 3:15-16

Definition and Concepts

God's people, in the community of faith and enabled by the Holy Spirit, gathered writings recognized as God's Word into special collections for hearing, reading, studying, and proclaiming the Good News and teachings necessary for the spiritual health of God's people.

Jesus and the apostles recognized the Hebrew canon of Scripture (24/39 books). The Christian church, with near unanimity, has recognized the 27 books of the New Testament as canonical.

Within the NT itself there is evidence of the gathering of its writings into a group (Paul’s writings) and the high value of the writings themselves. These writings have been gathered, read, taught, translated and proclaimed and God’s Word for two millennia.

The writings known as the Apocrypha (“hidden”) were judged canonical by the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Trent in 1546, likely as a reaction to the appeal to normative Scripture

by the reformers. These writings have value for the background of inter-testamental history and wisdom but were claimed as Scripture very much too late, without broadest agreement, and with some questionable teaching.

[Closure and] Preservation

Scripture

Psalm 119:89; Jeremiah 36:9-32; Matthew 24:35;
Revelation 22:18-19 [Genesis 1-3 with Revelation 21-22]

Definition and Concepts

Just as Israel recognized that God's writings had ceased (Josephus), so also did the Christian church (Church Fathers). The earliest complete listing of the present NT canon is found in Athanasias' 39th Paschal festival letter (AD 367). This testimony was matched by the official declaration of the Council of Carthage (AD 397) of NT books listed in the exact current canonical order.

Providentially, the writings of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament have been preserved in numerous manuscripts, through copies of the writings and other versions. Hundreds of OT manuscripts and more than 5,800 Greek manuscripts (plus 10,000 Latin and 9,300 in other languages) give great confidence that the text of the Bible is a faithful representation of the original writings.