
QUESTION: Can the Bible be Trusted? Hasn't It Been Corrupted by Man?**Summary Verses | 2 Timothy 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 complete, equipped for every good work."

Major Talking Points

- Production – 66 Books, 1,500 Years, 40 Authors, and One Uniting Theme
- Preservation – An Embarrassment of Riches Regarding Manuscript Evidence
- Prophecy – Old Testament Prophecies Explicitly and Historically Fulfilled
- Profession – Scripture Claims to be the Inerrant Word of God
- Proclaimed – Christ Taught and Saw Scripture as the Inerrant Word of God
- Personal Testimony – Scripture has Transformed My Personal View of God

In-Depth Breakdown**1. Production**

- Explanation – The Bible consists of 66 books, written by over 40 authors across 1,500 years, in three languages, and on three continents. Despite this vast diversity, it remains unified by a single, overarching theme—Redemption in Christ.
 - These authors came from all walks of life—kings, shepherds, poets, fishermen, tax collectors, doctors, and rabbis—each contributing to the divine narrative.
 - Scripture embraces a variety of literary genres while maintaining perfect unity, including:
 - Narrative, History, Poetry, Biography, Exposition, Letters, Parables, Prophecies, and Sermons
- Criteria Used to Discover the Authority of Specific Books (ABCD)
 - Author – Was the book written by a prophet, apostle, or someone directly connected to an apostle?
 - Belief – Does it uphold orthodox doctrine, convict, and edify the Church?
 - Consistent – Is it in harmony with the rest of Scripture and apostolic teaching?
 - Distribution – Was it widely accepted and circulated by the early Church?
- This framework ensures that Scripture is not just an ancient collection of writings but the divinely inspired, authoritative Word of God.

2. Preservation

- Explanation – Scholars often describe the wealth of manuscript evidence supporting the New Testament as *"an embarrassment of riches."* If the Bible cannot be trusted as a historical document, then no ancient text can.
 - No other work from antiquity even comes close to the volume of manuscript evidence available for both the Old and New Testaments.
- The Dead Sea Scrolls – Confirming the Accuracy of the Old Testament

- Discovered in 1948 near the Dead Sea, these scrolls contained tens of thousands of fragments dating from the third century B.C. to A.D. 68 and included copies of nearly every Old Testament book.
- The remarkable 99.5% accuracy between these ancient texts and our modern Old Testament demonstrates the Bible’s textual integrity over time.
- The minor differences found were 99% related to spelling, punctuation, or word order, none of which affected doctrine.
- These findings affirm that the Old Testament has been faithfully preserved throughout history and remains historically and archaeologically reliable.
- An “Embarrassment of Riches” – The Accuracy of the New Testament
 - The reliability of an ancient text is measured by three key factors:
 - The number of surviving manuscripts.
 - The time gap between the original and earliest copies.
 - The consistency of those copies.
 - By all these standards, the New Testament surpasses every other trusted work of antiquity.
 - With **thousands of manuscripts** and copies written significantly closer to the originals than any other ancient text, the New Testament stands as the most well-preserved and verifiable document from the ancient world.

Writing	When Written	Earliest Copy	Span between written to earliest copy	# of Copies
<i>Plato</i>	427-347 BC	AD 900	1,200 Years	7
<i>Homer (Iliad)</i>	900 BC	400 BC	500 Years	643
<i>New Testament</i>	AD 40-100	AD 125	25 Years	24,000

- Preservation of the New Testament:
 - # of Greet NT Manuscripts = 5,700+
 - # of Latin NT Manuscripts = 10,000+
 - # of Versions = 10,000-15,000
 - # of Church Father Quotations 1,000,000+
- New Testament Manuscripts Compared to Other Ancient Works

Author	Oldest MS	Number Surviving
Plato (427-347 BC)	AD 900	7
Sophocles (496-406 BC)	AD 1000	193
Aristotle (384-322 BC)	AD 1100	49
Homer (900 BC)	400 BC	643
Livy (59 BC – AD 17)	4 th Century AD	27
Tacitus (AD 56-120)	9 th Century AD	3
Suetonius (AD 69-140)	9 th Century AD	200+
Thucydides (460-400 BC)	1 st Century AD	20
Herodotus (484-425 BC)	1 st Century AD	75

- These overwhelming evidences confirm that the Bible has been meticulously transmitted through history, proving its trustworthiness and divine preservation.
- Ken Boa said, “The Bible has been subject to more abuse, perversion, destructive criticism, and pure hate than any other book. Yet it continues to stand the test of time while its critics are refuted and forgotten.”

3. Prophecy

- Explanation – The Bible foretells events centuries in advance, with historical records confirming their fulfillment.
 - The Old Testament contains over 40 distinct Messianic prophecies, all precisely fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
 - Louis Lapides, an expert on Messianic prophecy, calculated that the probability of just eight of these prophecies being fulfilled by one person is 1 in 100 million billion—a number astronomically greater than the total number of people who have ever lived. Yet, Jesus fulfilled all 40.
- OT Prophecies Fulfilled by Christ:
 - Birthplace of Jesus (Micah 5:2 — Matthew 2:6)
 - Jesus preceded by a forerunner (Malachi 3:1 — Matthew 3:1-3)
 - Jesus betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zech 11:12-13 — Matt. 26:14-15)
 - Ride into Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9 — Mark 11:1-11)
 - Manner of Christ's Crucifixion (Isaiah 53:7-12 — Mark 15:3-4)
 - Jesus would be scourged and spit on (Isaiah 50:6 — Matthew 26:67)
 - Jesus' feet would be pierced (Psalm 22:16 — Matthew 27:34)
 - He would agonize with thirst (Psalm 22:15 — John 19:28)
 - Garments would be distributed at death (Ps 22:18 — John 19:23-24)
 - No bone in His body would be broken (Psalm 34:20 — John 19:33-36)
- The precise fulfillment of these prophecies is statistically impossible by chance, proving that the Bible is not just an ancient text but the divinely inspired Word of God.

4. Profession

- Explanation – The Bible claims to be the divinely inspired Word of God, written by human authors who were moved by the Holy Spirit to communicate His truth.
 - Internal Evidence - Firsthand Witnesses
 - 2 Peter 1:16 - "For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty."
 - The authors of Scripture were not relaying fables or secondhand accounts but were eyewitnesses to God's work in history.
 - Inspired by God
 - 2 Timothy 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 complete, equipped for every good work."
 - 2 Peter 1:20-21 - "Knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 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."
 - These passages affirm that Scripture is not a human invention but the very breath of God, divinely given for instruction and transformation.

- Is This Circular Reasoning?
 - In a sense, yes. But this is necessary for divine revelation.
 - Consider the validation of a great professional athlete-entry into the Hall of Fame confirms their greatness. The Hall of Fame itself is the authority that validates the claim.
 - The Bible, as God's Word, has no higher authority to appeal to. If an external source could validate Scripture, that source would be greater than God's Word, which is impossible.
 - Because God is the highest authority, His Word must stand as its own validation.
- Thus, the Bible's divine inspiration is self-authenticating, internally consistent, and historically verifiable, making it the ultimate standard of truth.

5. Proclaimed

- Explanation – We can trust the Bible as true and authoritative because Jesus Himself trusted and affirmed it as the foundation for His life and the lives of others.
 - Jesus Could Not Have Held a Higher View of Scripture:
 - Trustworthy (Matthew 5:17-18)
 - Relevant (Matthew 5:19-20)
 - Understandable (Matthew 5:19-20)
 - Sufficient (John 17:17)
 - True (John 10:35)
 - Historically Accurate (Matthew 12:38-42)
 - Intimate (John 12:48)
 - Miraculous (John 16:12-15)
- Since Jesus—God in the flesh—fully trusted and upheld Scripture, we too can have full confidence in its truth, authority, and life-changing power.

6. Personal Testimony

- Explanation – Christians experience comfort, conviction, and transformation through the living, active, and authoritative Word of God.
 - Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
- Because God's Word is alive, powerful, and deeply personal, it brings comfort in trials, challenge in complacency, and transformation in every aspect of life.