

## The Bible

### 1. Why do we need the Bible?

- Holds the key to knowing for certain that God exists, and how we can know about Him if He does exist.
- Job 11:7-9
- Our minds are not able to conceive all the realities of God.
- So, He takes the initiative to reveal to us what He wants us to know.
- Through everyday human histories God tells us where we came from, where we are going, and the purpose of our lives.
- He gives us practical instructions, heart-thumping encouragement, warnings, and divine wisdom.
- Allow the Bible to speak with authority against:
  - Relativism – no one source of truth
  - Postmodernism – elastic morality or situational ethics, I choose what is best
  - Secularism – living for the right here, right now.

### 2. Why was the Bible written?

- God has chosen to reveal Himself to us! This revelation takes place in several ways:
  - Nature: all of creation proclaims the existence of God,
    - Romans 1:20, Psalm 19:1-3
  - History: particularly in the history of the nation of Israel.
  - Prophets: they interpreted historical events and revealed God's will to the people.
    - Thus says the Lord
  - Special and complete revelation: Jesus Christ.
    - Heb. 1:1-2
- But, something needed to be done to reach those who were not eyewitnesses. So, a written record was needed, and the Bible was God's chosen vehicle.
- OT written over about 1100 years, the NT over 100 years.
- Languages?
  - OT – Hebrew
  - NT – Koine Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic
- AD 1214, chapters were added
- AD 1500, verses were numbered.

### 3. When people say, "The Bible is inspired," what do they mean?

- 2 Peter 1:20-21
- 2 Timothy 3:16 – All scripture is God-breathed
- Scripture originated in the mind of God, not in the mind of man.
- It was given to man by inspiration.
  - The writers wrote what God wanted them to write, disclosing the exact truth He wanted conveyed.
- There are many views of inspiration, we hold to the ***Plenary, verbal view of inspiration***.
  - Plenary – means "full," all of scripture is inspired, and God has told us all we need to know about Him, no more, no less.
  - Verbal – the very words themselves are inspired, not just the ideas or truth.
    - The writers used the right words.
    - God did not dictate the Bible, but guided the writers within the framework of their own personalities and backgrounds.

- This view stresses the authenticity and reliability of the very words that were written.
- Scott believes the Bible is both infallible (reliable, trustworthy) and inerrant (there are no mistakes).
  - Inerrancy is a politically-packed word these days, most often referring to interpretation and application rather than to the reliability of God's word.
  - We try not to use inerrancy as a political hammer against those with different opinions on the application of scripture.

#### 4. How would you explain the phrase, "canon of scripture?"

- Which books are inspired? There were many choices.
- Athanasius in AD 367, listed the books of the NT we have today, saying he thought that these were divinely inspired.
- Council of Carthage in AD 397, agreed with him, effectively closing the canon.
- They used 3 tests to determine whether or not a book was divinely inspired.
  - Was the book connected to an Apostle?
  - Was the book used and recognized by the majority of the churches?
  - Did the book teach sound doctrine?
- We believe God guided these men to these books and protected the Bible for all of us.

#### 5. Is the Bible scientifically accurate?

How to think about this topic:

- Phenomenological language – describes things as they appear, rather than in precise scientific terms.
  - Sun rises in the east
  - The Bible does not claim to be a scientific text, but it does not give out misinformation.
- When the Bible gives incomplete information, it is not necessarily incorrect information.
  - We are always, like science, learning and advancing.
- Accept the reality of presuppositions.
  - Some do not believe in miracles and will never accept any explanation that does.
  - "Demon possession," Resurrection, etc.
- When there seems to be a genuine conflict, the Christian's response should be: wait and see.
  - There has never been any scientific or archaeological discovery to disprove the Bible, and we believe there never will be.
  - Let's wait and see what are advances in learning reveal to us.

#### 6. What is illumination?

- Scripture becomes meaningful to individuals when their hearts are open and illumined by the Spirit
- Matt. 16:15-17, Luke 24:27,31,45; John 16:13
- The Spirit allows us to believe what has always been true, and always will be true.
- We only understand Scripture and believe it when God enables us to.
- I don't defend Scripture, that is God's job to convince. I merely tell others what I believe.